

From Mountain Tops to Coastal Wetlands:

A case study of attitudes and values in the workplace and their  
influence on career development

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by L.A. Maguire

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## **Abstract**

This case study has been about the attitudes and values of a group of participants in a specific workplace. The aim has been to try and ascertain if the identified attitudes and values of the participants have had any influence on career development. There were 12 participants involved and at the time of this project they were either in permanent part or full time employment with 'The Company'. 'The Company' is a pseudonym given to the business where the participants worked and the setting for this research project. The workplace is situated in a remote location on an industrial work site in New Zealand. Each participant engaged in the research voluntarily. They completed a questionnaire and took part in a semi-structured interview. Confidentiality and anonymity of all participants had been respected and maintained throughout the entire project. Results show that there were three principle influences that could be attributed to the ways that participants perceived the workplace and personal career development. They were workplace values, workplace training, and workplace goals. These attributes are influenced in different ways and hold divergent meaning for individual participants. The most highly rated value, as identified by participants in this project has been variation of tasks undertaken in the workplace. This was not challenged by any of the indicators used to consider opinions and values expressed by participants; education, generational groupings, career type and work streams. Seven of the twelve participants desired promotion within 'The Company'. The ways that participants hoped to achieve promotion was often unspecified. Participants did not articulate specific planning methods. Future research is recommended such as focusing on how employees can develop career goals that fit with the goals of their workplace.

## Glossary

**Tool Box Talk.** A way of keeping employees up-to-date with new policies and procedures, or of relaying information relating to the workplace or specifically to 'The Company'. They usually involve a PowerPoint presentation and an open forum for questions from staff.

**Four Quadrant Leadership (4QL).** A leadership course, facilitated by outside professionals, to help managers and those with leadership responsibilities to successfully lead teams and individuals in business and the workplace. Retrieved from: (<http://wjinst.com/wjinst/4ql.htm>).

**Behavioural Observation Scale.** A method used to appraise human behaviour against a preferred level of performance. It is a behaviour-based measure and can be used in job appraisals, classroom evaluations and in the assessment of medical conditions. Using several questionnaires, the scale measures desired behaviours such as frequency and intensity (Locke & Latham, 1984).

**Work Streams.** Within the structure of 'The Company' there are different hierarchical levels regarding the composition of occupations. In this project the work streams of manager, supervisor, task leader and fieldworker have been used. A manager is responsible for the running of a particular department. A supervisor works with a manager and also ensures fieldwork meets expectations of both 'The Company' and clientele. Task leaders are responsible for undertaking allocated tasks and completing them to required standards often with the assistance of fieldworkers, who work under the task leader's instruction.

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction and Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

This research project was undertaken in a unique environment that is remotely located in an isolated part of New Zealand. The workplace in this project sits on a industrial work site, surrounded by natural beauty and is subject to changeable weather patterns.

The workers all require specialised training as theirs are uncommon tasks that require skill, speed, determination and hard physical work in often unforgiving weather and hostile physical environments.

How do they learn the skills they need to do their job effectively and efficiently? Does the way they feel about their job affect their future and the career pathways they follow? What type of goals, if any, do these workers set and what influence do they have in the workplace and on their futures?

The attributes that impact on the attitudes and values that employees have in the workplace vary from one person to another. There are many variables to be considered that influence personal thoughts, feelings and choices. ‘Studies (of) the interpretations people make of their experience’ is defined as hermeneutic phenomenology (Loftus and Higgs, 2010, p382).

The focus of this project is specifically on 12 participants in this workplace and how these questions relate to them. A qualitative research

method has been used as a catalyst to gain insight and understanding of the participants and their workplace.

‘One cannot understand the actions of an individual without understanding the situation in which her actions are meant to have an impact. As a result variables like career, the labor market, and the life situation are becoming more important. Such a multi-methodological approach should be the rule rather than the exception when approaching more fluid conditions of work.’  
(Allvin. 2008, p. 42).

The intention of this literature review is to explore what has been written about career development and some of the ways it can be influenced. The literature has been narrowed to three principal concepts; values at work, training in the workplace and career goals. Particular emphasis will be placed on attitudes and values that are held by employees and what, if any, influence these have on career development.

A literature search was conducted using the following databases; ERIC online: EBSCOhost, business/economics, earth/environmental and education, Sage research methods and PSYCHINFO. A search was also conducted of the University of Canterbury library catalogue.

Journal articles that had been peer reviewed, had a full text access and were published between 1985 and 2014 were considered. A wide range of descriptors related to workplace learning was used, such as; ‘workplace learning’, ‘adult learning’, ‘adult education’, ‘adult learning styles’, ‘practical work’, and ‘environmental workplace’ to name but a few.

Other projects with identifiable similarities were also considered, using criteria relevant to the work type environment such as small companies, governance type, industrial work sites, work streams and psychological perspectives.

The literature review focuses on research that was regarded as most relevant to this research project. The relevant literature will be discussed under the following three categories: “workplace values”, “workplace training” and “career goals”.

## **Workplace Values**

### **Introduction**

Henderson and Thompson (2003) believe that values are not mere words but abstract concepts that need to be experienced and lived. They suggest that while some people may consider money important it is not a value in itself, but rather what it represents is; power, wealth, freedom and security, (p. 15).

Henderson and Thompson (2003, p. 15) define values as:

‘... the sum of our preferences and priorities. Preferences are what we would rather have in our lives than do without. Priorities indicate how important each preference is in relation to another. A value can therefore be described as a preference multiplied by its priority.  
Preference x Priority = Value’.

The notion of values as an abstract concept is also endorsed by Howard Gardner (2008) who further defines values as; ‘the capacity to reflect explicitly on the ways in which one does or does not fulfil a certain role’ (p. 130).



In the workplace, a group of New Zealand human resource managers (HRM) identified three key factors that employees value; career progression, fair levels of remuneration and formal and informal communications with their managers and/or leaders, the latter being especially valued as a process for providing feedback (Short & Harris, 2010).

Taylor and Caldarelli (2004) found that beliefs are important in helping people to discover and make sense of the world. They suggest that the teaching of values and beliefs are like the hidden, unseen bulk of an iceberg under the water, upon which all teaching techniques rest on, there but not visible.

Attitudes, values and beliefs held by a group are defined as ideologies (Geare, Edgar & McAndrew, 2009). These can relate to wider society or be as specific as an organisation. In the workplace context the two recognised ideologies are unitary and pluralist. The unitary employee aims to work towards working in unity and harmony with others towards a common purpose, whereas the pluralist acknowledges there is more than one set of beliefs within the group and that the group may agree or oppose one another.

Values in the workplace can be extrinsic or intrinsic (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010). Extrinsic values are the rewards that employees receive outside of themselves. For example, financial remuneration, rank increments or promotion. Intrinsic values refer to the abstract values that employees seek such as, interesting work, opportunities to be creative and development of skill which may include the internalising of feelings that lead to enjoyment, reward and doing a good job. Twenge et al. also identified other areas they considered employees held as values including involvement in

decision making regarding employment, guarantee of employment, giving to society, recreation time and recognition by society.

In addition to intrinsic and extrinsic values Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss (1999) also include social and prestige as standalone values. (In past studies these areas have been included as either intrinsic or extrinsic values.) Social values could be; ‘work is seen as a vehicle’, (to get from one place to another; e.g., promotion within the place of employment or developmental stages of a career), work helps achieve social relations and allows the employee to contribute to society. Some examples of prestige values are; ‘authority, influence, power and achievement at work’ (p. 56). Short (2008) discusses the distribution of power in the workplace expounding on his ideas by listing nine areas that he believes influence it. They include; power distribution is not equally shared between employees, workers may train for a specific task but managers can develop more comprehensive skills, knowledge is power and educated employees are valuable, performance management systems can reinforce a boss/subordinate relationship and employers often support skill based remuneration which can lead to tensions in the workforce.

Four strands of work values have been identified that employees hold in the workplace; extrinsic, intrinsic, social and prestige (Ros et al. 1999). These four strands of work values will be used in this research project to define and identify participants’ work values at ‘The Company’.

### **Different perspectives of values in the workplace**

In their study about individuals in a changing working life, Näswall, Hellgren and Sverke (2008) state that, while it is important to look at the past

when experiencing change in the workplace, it is also important to consider the viewpoint of the employee. This suggests that people hold different perspectives regarding their work and these viewpoints should be taken into account when employment issues are considered.

One study that considered gender perspectives was investigated by Dyke and Murphy (2006). They interviewed 40 men and women to find out what mattered most to them when they conducted a study about defining success. They found that women valued relationships both inside and outside the workplace and were willing to 'trade career prospects' so that they could stay true to their beliefs. Men on the other hand were more inclined to want material success and often were not comfortable pursuing other goals and interests until they had reached the bench-marks they set for themselves (p. 367).

Irrespective of the findings on gender differences, employers' benefit from having staff who are committed to their job. Employees who are committed to their job also experience benefits. This creates a positive relationship between employer and employee. A study by Meyer and Matlin (2010) suggests that employers who develop a community of positive commitment reduce illness and promote positive well-being in the workplace they manage, as well as retaining employees who will be less likely to leave.

Loftus and Higgs (2010) found when looking at medical professionals and their patients that each group had different perspectives relating to values, outcomes and responsibilities. Loftus and Higgs also identified differing opinions amongst medical professionals and recognised a 'delicate balance' in the way care and interventions was perceived to be best (p. 383). 'Dialogical

relationships' help to recognise these differences and work to overcome them (p. 383). In the workplace, dialogical relationships refer to conversations are between workers and workers, workers and management or supervisors and are also discussed in social relationships, (Brockman and Dirkx, 2006, p. 21).

Brockman and Dirkx noted in their research that dialogical relationships were an essential component for machine operators when they problem-solved in the workplace.

Recognising the differences in perceptions of individuals and work groups can lead to a healthier workforce in a positive and committed workplace community. Another consideration to be made is the differences in generations. The next section will focus on workplace values with generational perspectives.

### **Values and generational groupings**

The values that are held in the workplace change over time. This is particularly true in the early years of employment, from school leavers through into early adulthood, (Chow, Harvey & Nancy, 2014). These authors found that some of the experiences that influenced work values from that group were unemployment experiences, post-secondary education pathways, family, gender and life events. Short and Harris (2010) found that Human Resource Managers in New Zealand believed that those individuals in the work force who are identified as Millennials (1981-2000) had a different expectation of their managers and leaders in the workplace than those from Generation X (1965-1980). Millennials also known as Generation Y are known as a group who are able to multi-task and will strive to succeed, often working harder than what is expected of them. They acknowledge authority in the workplace and desire a

relationship with the senior staff members, supervisors and managers (Bartley, Ladd, & Morris, 2007).

According to Short and Harris (2010) Millennials value communication, on both formal and informal levels regarding individual performance and progression. The managers and leaders who did not perform adequately, in their opinion, were not as highly valued. They were criticised and their perceived short fall was seen as a sign of inept management.

Other researchers suggest that Generation X (Gen X) employees often will seek immediate help and on-going advice for guidance and inspiration but prefer to independently problem-solve goal setting and delivering. Generation Xer's have been perceived, often unfairly, as arrogant or lazy due to preferring guidance with decision making and their attitude to work and life-style balance (Bartley, et al., 2007).

Baby Boomers(1946-1964) also known as Boomers are described as having distinctive outlooks, workplace ethics and lifestyle values. They have a reputation for being competitive, working hard and having a strong work ethic which leads to making them determined to succeed (Bartley et al., 2007).

Traditionalists (1922-1946) also known as Veterans are close to, or over, retirement age. They are hard working with a strong respect for authority, very loyal and patient and are often frugal in their nature (Bartley et al., 2007).

Twenge, et al. (2010) researched the generational differences in work values between three recognised groups; Boomers, Gen X and Millennials. They found there were differences in workplace values particularly with the Millennial employees who have recently entered or who are currently entering

the workplace. One of the findings that Twenge et al. found was that Millennials want and value leisure time more than Boomers or Gen X employees did at the same age or development of their careers. The Millennial employee tends to also value and expect to be extrinsically rewarded, via remuneration or status recognition. Twenge et al.'s study showed Millennials are not prepared to work as hard as Boomers or Gen X. Therefore, the values that Millennial employees are entering the workplace with differ from those of their predecessors; Gen X and Boomers.

Motivational drivers within a workplace mean different things to the generational groups according to Lancaster and Stillman (2002). They believe that traditionalists are rewarded by knowing that a job is well done; namely intrinsic rewards. Baby Boomers seek extrinsic rewards such as remuneration, promotion and recognition, which could also fit in with prestige values. On the other hand Gen Xers value their freedom and perceive it as the perfect accomplishment. These are social values. Millennials enjoy work that holds meaning to them and for them. For them, that is reward in itself and, like traditionalists, these are mostly intrinsic rewards although, as has already been mentioned in this section, extrinsic rewards are important to them as well.

A study by Fehring and Herring (2013) has shown that employees in their 30s tend to appreciate and value a work and life balance, especially areas of work satisfaction, quality of work and more flexible hours.

There is a change in the way that differing generations of workers undertake, develop and value the work they do. Boomers tend to traditionally stick with one career path and work hard to achieve. On the other hand, Gen X

workers are more likely to build their careers in a very different way. It has been noted that Boomers “live to work”, whereas Gen Xers “work to live” (Ferhing & Herring 2013, p. 501).

The next section will show, according to Gardner (2008), how work values develop.

### **Developing work values**

Howard Gardner (2008) introduces five types of thinking that he believes people need to cultivate as they move forward in their lives including in the work place. Listed below, along with their attributes that affirm their relevance in workplace situations, are the categories Gardner identifies;

1. Discipline – being able to continue developing and improving one’s skill level, often involving an additional discipline to those already acquired and having to apply some form of academic thinking.
2. Synthesizing – having the capability to sort through vast amounts of information so that it is prioritised and makes sense to one’s self and to others.
3. Creating – the ability to think outside the square; think of new ideas and formulas and is able to present them to others.
4. Respectful – the capacity to work with all manner of people, with understanding, tolerance and the ability to forgive.
5. Ethical – understanding and having the ability to share the core values of one’s workplace, even during times of uncertainty and change. Recognises that one has a responsibility as a community

member and also as a member of a wider global community and is not afraid to communicate those values and ethics to others.

Consistent with the five characteristics mentioned by Gardner (2008), Short and Harris (2010) found that employees valued working for an organisation that they believed could be trusted. If employees considered management to be fair and consistent in their requests and expectations staff were likely to be willing to undertake tasks asked of them, which could include “unexpected change, work re-organisation or the imposition of new rules” (p. 372). They also consider the fact that in today’s society there is a developing trend in the workforce where employees want to work in a way that acknowledges their personal morals and is considered honest and trustworthy. This means that the employee will want to work with and for organisations that are values-driven and hold similar “behaviours and socially appropriate goals” (p. 381) as they themselves do. Not all employees are able to, or desire to, foster a values-driven psyche in the workplace and the importance of this needs direction. The next section discusses the values of learning and work skills.

### **Values of learning and work skills**

Individuals, especially those with low skill levels and/or education levels need to want and value learning and learning opportunities that are real to them if they are to successfully get ahead in the workplace (Illeris, 2006). Illeris further suggests that those individuals who have experienced rejection and have not been respected have difficulty believing in themselves and find it hard to live up to the expectations that others may have for them. When employees value their job and consider it an important part of their lives they



are more inclined to have higher learning intentions (Kyndt & Baert; 2013). There are times when adults are more interested and likely to learn if they believe they have a valuable role with a purpose. This also contributes positively to their self-identity (Heimlech & Horr; 2010). Henderson & Thompson (2003) use the analogy of a car needing a wheel alignment to illustrate the reason why businesses and employees need to have complementary values. They suggest that organisations get the wobbles and are put under unnecessary strain when the values of both the organisation and its employees are misaligned.

As dynamics of employment have changed, the present day employee is likely to include the following traits in their career path; “periods of work and non-work, lateral, spiral and vertical progression, and intra-organisational as well as inter-organisational shifts” (Clarke, 2008, p. 10). Clarke further suggests that the time of one job for life and dependency on employers to provide job security as it has been known is over. She says, “ the concept of job security has been replaced by the concept of employability”, (p. 10). Employability involves complex issues related to the ability of an employee to remain in employment. There are many influences that can determine the success or failure of this. Clarke identifies some of them as; the labour market, personal circumstances, skill development and adaption to change. This may require changes in employers’ mindsets to support the employee and changes in trends of employment. Follow-up of employee learning is vital for any training to be successful (Oakland, 2003).

## **Values Summary**

Values mean different things to different people in a variety of situations. Differing perspectives such as generational groupings, gender, education and work opportunities can and do influence the way workers and employers identify and use the values they consider significant. In this project the definition used by Ros, Schwartz and Surkiss (1999) will be used acknowledging four strands of work values that affect both workers and employers. The four strands are intrinsic, extrinsic, social and prestige.

## **Workplace Training**

### **Introduction**

This section will focus on the second concept included in this chapter; training in the workplace.

Post-secondary education learning can be undertaken in the workplace. One method is through modern apprenticeship programmes where mentoring and job-based training are used as a means for attaining a recognised qualification. Another method is workplace training which involves employees learning on-the-job as they undertake, generally, paid employment (Järvensivu & Koski, 2012; Chisholm, Harris, Northwood & Johrendt, 2009; Lo Presti, 2009; Marsick, 1988). Workplace learning generally has two well defined purposes. The first is to develop the business (or place of employment) by providing improved or increased production, effective work practices and innovation. The second purpose is to develop the individual skills and knowledge of employees to both further their own learning and as citizens in

wider society (Boyd & Garrick, 1999). Helms Mills, Pyrch and Sawchuk (2003) also discuss two perspectives; (a) managerial, (efficiency and profitability) and (b) critical (economic imperatives). Both are considerations organisations have when contemplating on-the-job training. Workers may perceive workplace learning with a different perspective however, viewing it as a way to gain job related skills that will lead to increased workplace opportunities and job security (Helms Mills et al., 2003). Short (2008) develops these ideas by observing that life histories, social and cultural influences, education and life experiences that workers and employees have had in their past as well as their attitudes to life and their plans and hopes for the future significantly influence the way workplace learning opportunities are viewed (p. 39).

Lancaster and Stillman (2002) noticed some generational differences in training. Traditionalists are proud that they came from “the school of hard knocks”, gaining knowledge by learning the hard way (p. 278). They believe that others should learn the same way. Baby Boomers have a tendency to have concerns that too much training will cause employees to leave the workplace. Generation Xers have the exact opposite thinking to the Boomers and are inclined to believe the more training and learning that is offered the better staff satisfaction and retention. Millennials consider learning, training and acquisition of skills part of life and they are incorporated as part of their lifestyle.

In the workplace there are two types of instruction most often used; formal learning and informal experiences that address the employees' personal development as well as the skills, knowledge and values specific to the task (Zepke & Leach, 2006).

Formal instruction is usually the aspect of training that workers are required to undertake that is delivered via formalised training programmes. (These may be internal or out-sourced.) They are usually held in a classroom type environment and are structured. It is recorded that formal learning has only a 13% impact on jobs (Zhao & Kemp, 2012). Informal experiences and learning are often incidental, occur outside the classroom and can be self-directed. Watkins and Marsick (1992), cited in Zhao and Kemp, list seven characteristics that describe informal learning; (a) learning from experience, (b) the organizational context, (c) a focus on action, (d) non-routine conditions, (e) the tacit dimension of knowledge, (f) delimiters to learning (which influences the way that problem is framed and the extent of work capacity, and (g) enhancers of learning. They also state that informal learning generates 87% impact on jobs (p. 234).

There are two types of training that will be discussed in this project; formal instruction and informal experiences and learning. The rationale for this is that throughout this project these were the two most dominant forms of training undertaken.

A key to the informal learning that is undertaken in the workplace is the ability to experience the learning. This can happen in a variety of ways and

some of the relevant learning theories are discussed in the next sub-heading; learning theories.

### **Learning theories**

Kenner and Weinerman (2011) discuss three learning theories that are used with adult learners in the workplace; ‘tacit theory, informal theory and formal theory’ (p. 89).

#### **Tacit theory**

Tacit theory is when learners acquire understanding and skills from peers, teachers and the local culture. The imparted knowledge is implied and is commonly derived without open discussion, usually through observation or perceived expectations. These skills are often deeply ingrained and it can be difficult to change them especially if what has been learned is not conducive to the environment they are in. For example, the street-wise adult may carry authority with her peers in her local environment, but in the workplace she has to develop metacognitive skills to enable her to develop critical thinking and work related problem-solving skills. The way of thinking that she used on the street may have to change to allow the workplace skills to be learned.

#### **Informal theory**

Informal theory is developed primarily in the workplace for adults as they use and develop basic metacognitive skills. These, as tacit skills, are acquired through learning from peers and their environment. Recognised work skills are often seen by peers as a level of wisdom and they are used by

employers as a tool for promotion in the blue collar, trade and unskilled workforce (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011).

### **Formal theory**

Formal theory is used mainly in classrooms using whiteboards, PowerPoint presentations and pen and paper and is delivered by a person or persons who has knowledge and/or experience in the area being taught. Learners' knowledge is often assessed with a test; multiple choice, open-book, closed book or oral.

### **Cultural capital**

In the workplace people respond to learning and training in a variety of ways. To truly maximise opportunities for employees it is important to explore the various personal aspects in the workplace setting (Loftus & Higgs, 2010). Zepke and Leach (2006) discuss "cultural capital" (p. 512) which they imply is accepting of the characteristics of the informal and tacit theories being 'an accepting culture'. Unique to an individual adult learner, cultural capital is the values, educational qualifications, social conditioning and interpersonal skills that belong to them alone. Zepke and Leach also suggest that a person's cultural capital is a pedagogical challenge for those who are responsible for training and assessment. To maximise the cultural capital of an individual in the workplace, the type of training offered and the learning types acknowledged impact on the success of programmes offered. The following section explores training and learning types.

## **Training and learning types**

The way that people work, plan their career and learn and behave in the workplace has undergone changes in recent times (Lo Presti, 2009). Changes, which may lead to a variety of threats and/or challenges, can be beneficial for some employees yet detrimental for others (Näswall, Hellgren & Sverke, 2008). Some of these identified changes are; the need or want for flexible employment conditions and hours of work, the possibility of several careers (or career moves) in one lifetime, more than one part-time job (Clarke, 2008).

Chishlom, Harris, Northwood and Johrendt (2009) argue that work-based learning does not necessarily set the scene for the acquisition of knowledge that on-the-job learners seek. They believe several factors need to be considered. These include the theories of experiential learning, especially those of Epstein's cognitive experiential self theory (cited in Chisolm et al. 1994, p. 329) Sternberg's 'work' related learning (cited in Chisolm et al., p. 332), and Itin's 'diamond model for experiential learning' (Itin, 1999, p. 95). These theories are discussed in more detail in the next sections.

### **Epstein's theory**

Epstein developed the model of cognitive-experiential self theory (CEST) which recognises the roles that both rational and experiential modes of learning have when learners are reflecting on processes that need to be understood. The rational aspect is said to be based on conscious thoughts and actions that are 'intentional, analytic, primarily verbal and relatively "effect

free”, (Epstein, Pacini, Denes-Raj & Heier, 1996. p. 391). The experiential aspect is thought to be “automatic, preconscious, holistic, associationistic, primarily non verbal and intimately associated with affect”, (Epstein et al. p. 391). Heuristic processing and emotions are closely linked with the experiential learning and processing mode whereas rational learning and processing tends to be more effect free. For successful learning outcomes to occur it is important that both modes of learning carry equal status in developing learning processes in the workplace (Chisholm et al., 2009). However, Epstein et al. (1996) deduced that both rational and experiential thinking styles can work either independently or in conjunction with each other.

### **Sternberg’s theory**

Sternberg (2011) developed a method of teaching a “combination of creative, analytical, practical and wise thinking”. He believes that the combinations of “wisdom, intelligence (and) creativity” are a possible means for improving both “instruction and assessment” (p. 311).

Sternberg’s theory of triarchic intelligence has three domains; componential (academic), experiential (creative) and contextual (street-smart) (Chisholm et al., 2009). These components all need to work together for effective work-based learning to occur. If there is an uneven mix of use from any of the components the learner’s ability to process concepts effectively is compromised. For example, the workplace learner who can read through papers and correctly answer tests may not be able to problem-solve real-life issues relevant to the job or have common sense that would prevent an injury to themselves or a work colleague.



### **Dewey and Itin's theories**

Dewey believed that experiences were an essential component to successful learning. He considered that learners draw on past knowledge and experiences when they are faced with new learning. He believed that successful learners experience a real event. In the workplace this might be a more experienced worker modelling a work process to a less experienced worker. Once the learning events have taken place the less experienced worker or learner has time to reflect on the learning that has occurred. This could include discussion, observation, reflection or a combination of these. The next stage in the model identifies abstract conceptualisation in which the learner gains some meaning from the learning experience. It is also desirable that the user use some previous wisdom that they have gained in another situation. Finally there is the application phase where the learner can apply the knowledge or skills gained through the learning experience.

Itin further advanced Dewey's model to develop the 'diamond model for experiential learning' (Chisholm et al. 2009, p. 327) where both the educator and the learner follow a path together that involves a partnership of learning goals and knowledge sharing. This model considers the learner, educator, environment and subject matter and is ideally suited to workplace learning. It acknowledges the importance of engaging the whole person in the learning process; intellect, social, emotion and physical components. The educator or facilitator is seen as a critical player in the success of the learner's understanding and learning of new concepts (Chisholm, et al., 2009; Itin. 1999).

### **Scribner and Oakland's theories**

Scribner (1986) claimed that occupational activities can have pre-set problems, objectives and technological conditions that impact on the ability of people to problem-solve in the work place. Successful companies adopt strategies that have commitment to investing into the planning of training that is meaningful and appropriate for the task to be learned (Oakland, 2003). Oakland identifies the manager of these successful companies as playing a vital role in the benefit of the quality of training, allowing employees to attain higher levels of job skills, educational development and improved health and safety. Scribner (cited in Chisolm et al., 1996, p. 324), describes 'working intelligence', which she sees as the ability to think and problem-solve in the work place, while Conner (cited in Chisolm et al., p. 324) expands on Scribner's idea and suggests that interacting and listening to others, as well as motivation, are critical factors for successful work place learning. Smith (cited in Chisolm et al., p. 324) believes that learners should be actively involved in their learning not merely thinking about a situation.

Oakland (2003) developed a systematic model of training that identifies four elements of training in four phases which are: (a) identify training needs, this is known as the assessment phase, (b) plan/design training the planning/design phase, (c) deliver the training implementation phase and (d) evaluate the training evaluation phase (Oakland, 2003, p. 275).

Learning in the workplace can only occur if the learner is engaged in the process of skill acquisition. Some of the barriers to learning and training that occur in the workplace are discussed in the following section.

## **Barriers to learning and training in the workplace**

Learning, on-going training, and the development of career are the focus of many employees as they pursue a career pathway. Organisations can be impaired from supporting the employee if there are 'lean organisational structures and business pressures' (Short & Harris, 2010. p. 375) which often make it difficult to release employees from their work to undertake courses and/or training.

People identified as being resistant to workplace learning were often those who did not recognise the "true value of learning" (Short & Harris, 2010). These people were often in positions of management and sought quick fix solutions to learning and skill gaps rather than recognising that it often takes time for useful learning to happen. However there were also times when the role of training was recognised and accepted, but the pedagogy of adult education was absent.

Another group identified as being resistant to workplace learning were older workers (Traditionalists and some Baby Boomers) as they could not see any benefits from training (Ahlgren & Tett, 2010). It was recognised by the HRD group in Short and Harris's study (2010) that intensive company re-structures had occurred during the working life of older employees and they often had no training to cope with the changes in the workplace. It was deemed that these employees suffered low self esteem and "might be victims of misalignment when their organisation changed strategic direction" (p. 376).

Berge (2008) discerned that many managers put staff through courses or training when improving their work is not necessarily derived by receiving

more training. He identifies training as “individual learning’ whereas performance improvement is ‘improved productivity and profitability for the organization” (p. 392). Employee support of management could suffer detrimentally if there was perceived to be; ‘manager inconsistency, internal politicking and the presence of a vacuum in communications’ (Short & Harris, 2010. p. 373).

### **Workplace training summary**

A common theme emerging for learning and training in the workplace is the importance of using a variety of processes or tools that will enhance the learning and training process. All the learning theories mentioned in this chapter acknowledge the importance of a balanced training model that considers a combination of several factors; such as life experiences, educational skills and supportive learning environments with a higher level of on-the-job practical (or informal) learning than more classroom based (or formal learning). Experience, attitude and opportunities (tacit values) all impact on the chance of successful learning outcomes for the adult learner.

In this project the types of training made available to participants will be analysed to ascertain what learning styles are the most enjoyed and successful from their perspectives.

### **Work Goals**

#### **Introduction**

Landy (1989) says of the workplace, “once we start something we will not be happy until we reach a goal we have set for ourselves” (p. 402). Landy builds on this concept by discussing a finding of Locke (1968, 1970) who found

that, when difficult goals were set for individuals, they produced a higher performance. However, this was dependent on the individual accepting the goals set. Locke and Latham (1984) identified what they termed as ‘seven key steps in goal setting’ (p. 40). They are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1

*Seven Key Steps to Goal Setting*

Step	Action
1	Detail the task to be achieved, (write a job description).
2	Detail how the work will be measured.
3	Determine the goal in quantitative terms using directly measured output or Behavioural Observation Scale. Make the goal challenging but attainable.
4	Indicate the time it will take to achieve the goal.
5	Rank multiple goals in order of importance, ensuring unity in the ranking.
6	If needed – rate all goals quantitatively by prioritising and rating difficulty.
7	Decide coordination requirements for goal achievement. Use group goals if this is perceived to be the best option. Modification of goals should only occur if it is obvious the employee cannot reach the goal or circumstances change.

Adapted from “*Goal Setting: A Motivational Technique That Works!*” by E. Locke and G. Latham, 1984, p. 40.

Locke, as cited in Landy’s book (1989) also found that, for goals to become more attractive to individuals, money or other concrete awards may enhance the commitment to goal setting and achievement. Feedback is

important for goal achievement and goals affect task performance. According to Locke's research there was no evidence that an individual performed better if they were involved in the goal setting. Building on this research, Karakowsky and Mann (2008) have found that subsequent research shows that joint goal setting can, and does, achieve important consequences and confirms that challenging goal setting leads to higher performance. Karakowsky and Mann also note that employees rarely see goal outcomes as neutral but perceive there is either failure or success. They say that failure to achieve a goal leads to poorer performance in the workplace. To successfully set workplace goals and manage careers it is desirable to consider which career type best fits an employee so that there is better understanding of the vocational identity of each individual.

Lo Presti (2009) suggests people should be encouraged to develop their vocational identity and then be helped to "manage their careers in an intelligent, flexible and enjoyable way" (p. 133). To help identify a vocational identity it is necessary to understand the career patterns that best fit an employee. These will be discussed in the following section.

### **Career patterns**

Clarke (2008) identified four models of career patterns and employability which she labelled;

- Plodders, (employees who pursue a traditional career path, anticipating job security in return for hard work and loyalty to the company, p. 14).

- Pragmatists, (who pursue a traditional career actively, believing that the company will provide security and stability as well as opportunities for variety and professional development, p. 15).
- Visionaries, (employees who carefully plan and execute their career. Visionaries make a conscious decision to build long-term rather than short-term career choices. These people are willing to re-locate within companies but also geographically to reach their goals, p. 16).
- Opportunists, (who pursue varied career paths within a range of jobs and organisations. Opportunists see each move as a chance to learn new things and gain different experiences, p. 18).

These four patterns of behaviour fit into recognised models of career types which Clarke (2008) and Hall (2004) describe as; traditional (plodders and pragmatists), protean (opportunists) and boundaryless (visionaries).

### **The traditional career**

The traditional career path relies on the employer making career decisions on behalf of the employee. The employee generally expects that they will be looked after by their employer and that they will develop a position of security and stability in the workplace as they are promoted to higher positions with more responsibility over time. Although these choices are not usually strategically planned by the employee, the employee believes they are in their own best interests (Clarke, 2008). Values such as employees' loyalty, hard work and trust were highly regarded by employers and employees were rewarded

accordingly. There are some schools of thought which say this career model is challenged, dying or dead (Short, 2010; Loftus & Higgs, 2010; Lo Presti, 2009; Clarke, 2008). However, there are still employees and employers who embrace it. Lo Presti says that some of the standards that have been traditionally valued in the workplace are being impeded by such occurrences as the economy, job insecurity and decreasing salaries. Replacing the traditional career model are two contemporary models; the protean and boundaryless career types.

### **The protean career**

The protean career can be defined as one where career moves and decisions are driven by an individual's core values with the main success criterion being subjective psychological success (Hall, 2004). Hall further expands this definition by stating that a protean career is driven by personal motivation and values rather than looking to the workplace as the answer to life's rewards and purposes. Lo Presti (2009) identifies several characteristics that the protean career model epitomises; more movement, consideration of long term choices, working through one achievable goal at a time to reach a higher set goal and being driven by intellectual achievements. He further states that the employee who exhibits protean characteristics has specific career attitudes that recognise the role of personal values in guiding career decisions. They also are independent in managing their vocational behaviour, being both pro-active and self-directing.

Briscoe and Hall (2006) combined four different career dimensions of the protean career models developing the four quadrants of the protean career



type as shown in Table 2. The figure displays the type of protean career and the influence of values and employee drive which in turn influences the model.

Table 2

*Four Quadrants of the Protean Career Type*

<b>Dependent</b>	<b>Reactive</b>
Not values driven and not self-directed in areas of career management.	Not values driven but is self-directed.
<b>Protean</b>	<b>Rigid</b>
Values driven and self-directed.	Are values driven but not self-directed

Adapted from "The interplay of boundaryless and protean careers: Combinations and implications," by J. Briscoe and D. Hall, 2006, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69, p. 8.

The second recognised contemporary career type is the boundaryless career.

**The boundaryless career**

The boundaryless career is one that crosses different dimensions of objective and subjective boundaries. These can be tangible boundaries such as positions within a company or organisation, changing employers or company or moving town, city or country for employment opportunities or career advancement. Changes in boundaries could also be influenced by personal feelings or opinions (Briscoe, Hall & De Muth, 2005).

Sullivan and Arthur (2006) undertook a similar type of investigation with the boundaryless career type as Briscoe and Hall (2006) did with the protean model. They also developed a model with four quadrants. Each

quadrant shows the levels of physical and psychological mobility that affects each and they are numbered 1 – 4. This is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

*Four Quadrants of the Boundaryless Career Type*

1 –	2 –
Low in physical and psychological mobility	High physical but low psychological mobility
4 –	3 –
Exhibit physical and psychological mobility	Strong psychological but low physical mobility

Adapted from “The interplay of boundaryless and protean careers: Combinations and implications,” by J. Briscoe and D. Hall, 2006, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69, p. 8.

### Career Profiles

From the eight identified models, (as shown in Tables 2 and 3), Briscoe and Hall (2006) identified ‘career profiles’ (p. 11) by combining medium and high likelihoods of occurrence from those combinations. Each of the profiles has been identified as having unique and independent challenges for maintaining a status quo in current employment situations and also challenges for career development. All eight profiles have been determined by combining the protean quadrant with a boundaryless quadrant. For example, dependent + 1. The combinations have been placed in tabular form with the first column showing the profile combination. The second column shows the name that

Briscoe and Hall have given to this type. The third column shows the characteristics of the particular career profile. They are shown in Table 4.

Table 4  
*Characteristics of career profiles*

Quadrant combinations	Profile name	Characteristics
Dependant + 1	Lost or Trapped	Not directed by inner values, have difficulty recognising opportunities; leading to few options or personal control of career situations.
Rigid + 1	Fortressed	Strong personal values, unable to recognise opportunities or to direct their own careers, need stability.
Dependant + 2	Wanderer	Advances opportunities that come their way but lack self-direction in values and career management.
Rigid + 3	Idealist	Strong values and psychologically boundaryless but lack strengths in career management, are physically tied to one place.
Reactive + 3	Organization man / woman	Strong ability to control their career but have unclear values. Desire stable physical environment but manages varied psychological boundaries.
Protean + 3	Solid Citizen	Strong values, able to manage own careers. Psychologically boundaryless but will not move physically.
Reactive + 4	Hired gun / hired hand	Willing to be mobile both physically and psychologically but not values driven.
Protean + 4	Protean career architect	Combine the highest attributes of both protean and boundaryless career types.

Adapted from "The interplay of boundaryless and protean careers: Combinations and implications," by J. Briscoe and D. Hall, 2006, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69, p.11.

## **Opportunities in the workplace and goal setting**

The learning culture of an organisation has an impact on the types of opportunities offered to employees (Ahlgren & Tett, 2010; Karakowsky & Mann, 2008). Considerations that are necessary for training success include supportive learning and working environments with employers, peers and teachers contributing (Zepke & Leach, 2006). It is important that opportunities are available for workers to learn the skills and necessary strategies to help them make informed decisions about work and life in general (Zepke & Leach). Clarke (2008) believes that to manage individual career development there needs to be more focus on the development of attitudes and behaviours that support employability.

Managers who are open-minded and flexible in their attitudes identified many values gained when their staff was involved with training and learning opportunities. They included employees understanding their job and role better and seeing themselves in the big picture. They also communicated more openly and effectively and increased their ability to show initiative (Ahlgren & Tett, 2010). Enjoyment and sharing of experiences increased employee confidence and motivation. Some managers had a negative attitude about the benefits of training and considered that employees were not engaged in learning and therefore were unable to learn or that there was nothing to be gained for the organisation if training was offered.

There are times when an individual's goals and dreams need to be reined in and given a realistic perspective. This can be especially true for those with low skills and it requires respect and understanding as well as a firmness that considers social realities (Illeris, 2006).

### **Goals summary**

The setting of goals covered in this project is related to a specific workplace; 'The Company'. The type of career profiles that participants identify with will be looked at along with the types of goal-setting skills and methods used to endeavour to gain insight into the influence these may have on career development.

### **Chapter Summary**

Three different influences in the workplace have been discussed in this chapter; values, training and goals. Values are specific and original to individuals but can be influenced by outside conditions such as; generational groupings, education and work opportunities. Four strands of work values will be used in this project to create an awareness and understanding of participants' values; extrinsic, intrinsic, social and prestige.

Training in the workplace usually occurs in formal or informal settings incorporating a variety of learning strategies and theories that enable the employee to develop and grow their skills. Goal setting in the workplace is an instrument that can be used by employers and employees to develop careers and career pathways. Identification of career profiles is one means to determining workplace goals for employees.

To support this research project explore the concepts discussed in this section, three research questions were developed to give information that will address the principle research question.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of this research project has been to explore the individual and personal perceptions of participants in an organisation specifically relating to their values, effects of on-the-job training and career development. This has been explored through the following questions:

1. Do participants' workplace values contribute to their engagement with on-the-job training and their self-management and the development of their careers?
2. Have the participants' perceived any differences in training opportunities over time in their current employment? To what do they attribute these changes?
3. From the perspective of the participants', whose goals influence and drive engagement in on-the-job training, career development and management of employees?

The above three questions have been investigated to help explore the main research question: From Mountain Tops to Coastal Wetlands: A case study of attitudes and values in the workplace and their influence on career development.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research has been to examine the attitudes and values in the workplace of participants employed by 'The Company'. It has also been to explore what, if any, relationship the identified attitudes and values may have had on career development. This was done by recruiting a group of 12 volunteers then having them complete a questionnaire (*Appendix A*) and participate in a semi-structured interview (*Appendix B*).

In this chapter the methodology that was used in this study is discussed. The rationale for using qualitative research design and a case study is given.

#### **Research Design**

##### **Qualitative research methodology**

'Qualitative research aims to uncover the lived reality or constructed meanings of the research participants' (Mutch, 2006, p. 43). It allows for descriptions to be told in great detail reinforcing the points that the researcher is focused on. This type of research explores people, their experiences and emotions and is often not measurable statistically. It is the methodology that has been used for this research project.

Taking into consideration all of the above objectives it was decided to use a case study approach for this project. A case study focuses on a single phenomenon such as, a person or group of people, a school, a workplace or an event. In this project the focus is on attitudes and values of participants employed at 'The Company' and the influence those attitudes and values may or may not have on their career development. The case study allows for a detailed 'analysis of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, institutions or other systems which are studied holistically by one or more methods' (Thomas, 2012).

The type of case study used in this research is called a "local knowledge case" (Thomas, 2012, p. 77). This is because the researcher was personally interested in the topic and wanted to find out more. A combination process was used as an analytical framework to explore the research; instrumental (using the study as a tool), evaluative (how is something working, or has worked) and explanatory (explains something in depth) (Thomas, p. 93).

A case study enables the researcher to look at a topic from a variety of angles (Thomas, 2012; Gillham, 2000). In this research participants gave a personal perspective, each unique and different, but at the same time showing distinct similarities and differences as the exploration of the topic developed and deepened. This approach is "drawing a picture, illustrative, descriptive and interpretative" (Thomas, p. 93).

The methods that have been used to gather information for this study are questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. A questionnaire was used



because it is suited for gathering non-complex information about a group. It allows for observations about the study group to be made (Mutch, 2006). The questionnaire used in this project had a combination of both multiple choice and open-ended questions (Gillham, 2000). A semi-structured interview was used in a one-to-one setting with each participant. At the interview the researcher had ten key questions to prompt participant and enable the sharing of information in a conversation-type manner. This allowed the researcher to gain a more in-depth understanding of the topic from the participant's perspective (Mutch, 2006).

The information gathering methods gave the researcher the opportunity to obtain rich descriptions. A rich description elucidates the depth of meaning and understanding that people have and shows why they feel the way that they do (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Rich descriptions allow participants to tell their own stories in their own words. These can be used by the researcher to show those experiences and understandings to others (Mutch, 2006). Each of the 12 participants in this study, during their interview, had opportunities to tell personal stories. They could give personal perspectives and expand on certain aspects of their work, their values and their career, using their own words.

### **Ethical Approval and Considerations**

Each research participant in this study has been treated with “care, sensitivity and respect for their status as human beings” (Oliver, 2014, p. 156).

This research was undertaken in the researcher's place of work and as Mutch (2006) points out special ethical consideration needs to be undertaken when conducting research in your workplace, it is known as "insider research" (p. 86). Tuhiwai Smith (cited in Mutch, 2006) is quoted as saying;

Insider research has to be ethical and respectful, as reflective and critical, as outsider research. It also needs to be humble. It needs to be humble because the researcher belongs to the community as a member with a different set of roles and relationships, status and position.

Ten ethical considerations, as set out by Mutch (2006) were taken into account throughout this project;

- Informed consent
- Voluntary participation
- The right to withdraw from the project
- Permission from the work place
- Ensuring that no deception towards anyone who was to become involved was made
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Privacy
- Participant safety
- Researcher safety
- Dissemination

(pp. 78-79).

Ethical approval was applied for and gained from the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee (ERHEC) before approaching any employees for this study. The principles and guidelines set out by ERHEC have been followed throughout the duration of this research.

Once ethical approval was given each employee at ‘The Company’ was given an information sheet (*Appendix C*) about the research with an invitation of participation, and consent forms. The consent forms (*Appendix D*) were returned to the researcher in the participants own time, either personally by hand, into the researcher’s in-tray or via a post-it box placed in the corner of the general staff work area, in a provided sealed envelope.

Participation was voluntary and every effort was made to ensure that no coercion or deception was used to gain participants’ confidence in the researcher or the research. Participants were made aware that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time and every effort would be made to remove their input and information from the study should they choose to do so.

### **Confidentiality and anonymity**

The researcher was very aware throughout the entire process of this research that participants were work colleagues who were being very trusting with information that they were sharing. All participants were given pseudonyms, P1 – P12, and every effort was made to make any references to employees of ‘The Company’ untraceable to an actual person or event. Correspondence relating this study was not opened or read at the workplace. All

recordings, paper and electronic, were stored outside of the workplace at the researcher's home in either a locked file cabinet or a password protected computer. All records have remained confidential to the researcher, the individual participants and the two University supervisors involved.

During the interview process a written transcript was undertaken. At the conclusion of the interview each participant read the transcript and signed their name to confirm its authenticity. This gave consent for the data to be used from it. Each interview was also recorded on a Dictaphone; this was only used during the transcription phase to gain clarity of a point that had been recorded in the written form.

On completion of the research a copy of the findings will be sent to all participants.

## **Setting**

### **‘The Company’**

‘The Company’ is a pseudonym for the place of work where this study was undertaken. Originating as a family business, ‘The Company’ has developed into a corporation that specialises in “hands on environmental solutions”. Work is subdivided into several departments; Flora and Fauna, Erosion Solutions, Waste Management, Invasive Species Control, Heights and Ropes, Environmental Monitoring and Effluent Management. ‘The Company’ is contracted by groups, businesses, companies and/or organisations to undertake services required. There is a management structure which includes

The Governance Team, General Manager, Managers, Supervisors, Task Leaders, and Field Workers. Much of the practical work undertaken by employees is outdoors, hands-on and physical and often occurs in extreme weather conditions. Within the parameters of this study the voluntary participants cover most of the work streams mentioned over a range of company positions.

### **Types of training offered to employees at ‘The Company’**

#### ***Tool box talks***

‘The Company’ has adopted several different formats of training and information delivery to staff. The most frequently used is a “tool box” talk. This is generally held after a regular morning meeting before field work commences. It routinely involves showing staff a PowerPoint of required training information, health and safety procedures or other policies or procedures that show an aspect of work or the working environment. PowerPoint presentations usually include words and some graphics. The information may be initiated by ‘The Company’ or a client and is usually generic to all work streams. Employees have an opportunity to ask questions and at the conclusion are required to sign that they have seen the presentation. The PowerPoint slides are printed off and pinned to a staff notice board or they can be viewed via computer on ‘The Company’s’ server. Staff are expected to view all presentations. There is not usually any follow-up to the presentations and they are seldom mentioned again until an addition to a policy or procedure has been made.

### ***In-house training***

Another way 'The Company' trains its staff is in-house training. An example of this has been task leader training. All task leaders have had a training day, as a group, which comprised of team building activities, learning company expectations, health and safety issues and specific responsibilities related to the task leader role. Training is undertaken by 'The Company' and management share the knowledge and provides the information that they believe is necessary to undertake this role to the standard that 'The Company' requires and expects. There is a combination of visual presentations, written work, discussions and role plays. Employees receive an information folder to take away with them. Management decide who will be suitable for task leader training, and at the time of this project one training session for task leaders had been held, for two different groups.

### ***Appraisals***

Individual employees have an appraisal once a year with the manager of the department they work in. This is an opportunity for employees to have one-to-one time for goal setting and to discuss any employment issues that the employee or manager consider important.

### ***External qualifications***

From time to time employees at 'The Company' are required to show their competency in certain areas such as driving company vehicles. As well as meeting New Zealand standards, employees are required to undertake an open-

book test or a self assessment to show that they understand ‘The Company’s’ expectations and requirements. There are times when a client may require employees from ‘The Company’ to provide evidence of skills and/or qualifications particular to a certain job. Some employees hold qualifications that are recognised by other stake holders, first aid certificates or New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA), standards, as examples. Employees undertake certification and up-skilling of these types of qualifications usually during paid work time to ensure they remain updated.

### ***On-the-job training***

Much of the training for specific tasks undertaken by staff at ‘The Company’ is learned on-the-job. This type of training is mainly for hands-on and practical tasks that employees need to firstly observe and then engage in. Supervision is conducted by someone with a higher level of skills and experience. It is often the task leader who is responsible for hands-on training. Supervisors come out into the field and perform “safe work observations” these are to ensure that all staff are meeting the expected health and safety requirements of both ‘The Company’ and their clients.

## **Recruitment of Participants**

### **Participant Selection**

All participants entered into this research voluntarily. There was not any coercion or expectations from either ‘The Company’ or the researcher. The

rationale of the research was presented to all employees in the same manner and format leaving choices of participation to the individual.

### **Invitation to Participants**

Each working day morning there is a meeting at 'The Company'. All employees attend before going out on their various tasks. It was at one of these meetings that this research project was presented, by the researcher, who is also an employee at 'The Company'. After a short verbal presentation and giving the opportunity for asking questions, an information sheet was given to all employees with an invitation to participate. A consent form was attached to the information sheet with an envelope addressed to the researcher. Staff that were not at the meeting were approached over the following week as opportunities presented themselves. They were given the same information as other staff members. In this way over the period of one week most staff at 'The Company' had been introduced to the research and given information sheets and consent forms.

If the employee decided they would like to become a participant, they were required to return the signed and dated consent form. Participants who completed and returned the consent form were later approached individually, in private, by the researcher. They were given an opportunity to ask any questions that they might have regarding the research project. Participants were given a copy of the questionnaire to take away and fill out at their leisure. Once the questionnaire was returned an appointment was made for an interview to take place.



## **Participants**

The 12 participants who took part in this research were recruited voluntarily from 'The Company'. They were in current full or part time employment at the time the research was undertaken.

Initially it was hoped to have an equal number of participants from each stream of the work force (fieldworkers, task leaders, supervisors and managers) however this did not occur naturally. The participant selection was readjusted so that the first 12 commitments were accepted. This was because recruitment was slow and the researcher was reluctant to ask for further time from 'The Company' to try and recruit more participants from specific work streams to fill gaps. Therefore, this research was undertaken by accepting the first 12 letters of consent from prospective participants that were received.

Of the 12 participants five were male and seven female. Ten identified themselves as New Zealand Europeans, one as Māori and one as Australian. One participant was in the 50-59 years age bracket, seven participants were in the 40-49 years age bracket, one was aged in the 30-39 age bracket and three were in the 21-29 years age bracket.

Ten participants received secondary school qualification with five gaining School Certificate, three University Entrance, one NCEA L2 and one NCEA L3. Two participants had left secondary school without any formal qualification. Of those two participants, one later gained qualifications through a Polytechnic Institute as an adult student. Two of the participants gained a

qualification at a Polytechnic Institute, one had gained a degree from a private training institute, two had gained university degrees and one had completed Post Graduate Studies. Of the 12 participants there one was one field worker, five task leaders, three supervisors and three managers. Table 5 shows the demographic variables of the participatory group.

Table 5.

*Demographic variables of the participatory group*

Work streams	No of participants	% of total employees	Gender		Age Range & Gender	Highest Qualification
			M	F		
Field workers	1	3	0	1	21-29 (F)	University degree
					21-29 (F)	Polytechnic Diploma
					40-49 (F)	School Certificate
					40-49 (F)	Polytechnic Diploma
Task Leaders	5	16	2	3	40-49(M)	School Certificate
					40-49(M)	University Entrance
Supervisors	3	9	1	2	40-49 (F)	School Certificate
					40-49 (M)	School Certificate
					50-59 (F)	University degree
					21-29 (M)	Business College Diploma
Managers	3	9	2	1	30-39 (M)	School Certificate
					40-49 (F)	Post Graduate Degree

In the table showing demographic variables ethnicity is not shown. This is because the participatory group is very small and participants would be easily identified by their given ethnicity. The larger number of task leaders, (5), is reflective of the actual work force at 'The Company', where there are more workers than managerial staff. (A brief description of all work streams involved in this project can be found in the glossary.)

## **Measures**

Two methods were used to gather data for this research.

### **The questionnaire**

After considering Bouma (as cited in Mutch , 2005) a questionnaire was developed by the researcher. Each question was developed giving attention to the type of data required so it could be used as a tool to collect survey data and demographic variables (Oliver, 2014). It was useful as an initial process to engage participants and encourage their thinking about the research topic. The researcher gained base line information that was later built on and developed during the interview at a more personal level. The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions that explored the research questions. The gathered information allowed the researcher to gain some of the required information to aid in analysing the research data (Mutch, 2006). Category questions and scale questions were used to gather data in the questionnaire.

### *Category questions*

For category questions, participants were required to tick the appropriate box that was the best fit for them. The questions related to demographic variables and covered; age, ethnicity, gender and education. An example of a category question that was used is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Questionnaire example showing a category question used to gather participant education information.

Please tick the appropriate box in relation to your education.

Education	<3 years secondary	NCEA L1
	NCEA L2	NCEA L3
	School Certificate	University Entrance
	Polytechnic	University

### *Scale questions*

The second type of questions used a scale to gain information. These were questions that would require a deeper level of thinking by the participant to show how they felt about a particular issue or situation. The scale ranged from 1 – 5. The categories that were used in the scale were:

1. Strongly Disagree,
2. Moderately Disagree,
3. Neither agree nor disagree,
4. Moderately Agree
5. Strongly Agree

(adapted from Mutch, 2006. p. 121).

Scale questions required participants to think about how true or relevant a statement or question was for them. The questions were specifically designed by the researcher to gather information that would lead to addressing the research questions. Two examples of questions and the type of information they gave are shown in the bullet pointed list below:

- Question 11: I am prepared to undertake learning that is related to my work in my **own** time, explores; “career exploration” (Kyndt & Baert, 2013), “career values” (Hall, 2003), “attitudes in the work place” (Briscoe, Hall & Frautschy DeMuth, 2005), and “career characteristics” (Briscoe & Hall, 2005).
- Question 13: I expect to be rewarded by ‘The Company’, either financially or by promotion, for all the training I undertake, which includes learning in my own time to improve my knowledge and skills, explores “career type” (Clarke, 2008; Briscoe & Hall, 2005; Hall 2003) and work values (Ros et al., 1999).

An example of a scale question used in the questionnaire is shown in figure 2.

Figure 2. Questionnaire example showing a scale question used to gather information about the usefulness of educational qualifications in participants current employment.

Qualifications that I have previously gained (e.g. polytechnic / tertiary) are beneficial in my current position

1      2      3      4      5

### **The interview**

Semi-structured interviews were used during this research. The semi-structured interviews “... have a set of key questions that are followed in a more open-ended manner” (Mutch, 2006, p. 126). Each interview was conducted one-to-one in a private setting to avoid distraction and disturbance. The researcher allowed the participants to choose the setting for their interview, whether they wanted this at work, in their home or at a café.

The participant was welcomed to the interview, made comfortable and had the procedure for the interview explained to them. The researcher had a set

of questions that were a guide for the interview format. The questions were open-ended for flexibility and in-depth consideration. There were times however when this format was deviated from as it was important for participants to have the freedom to tell their stories in their own way. Participants were able to share their own impressions and perspectives about issues that were discussed. Often a lead question would trigger a response from the participant that was not sought by the researcher. However these responses invariably lead to a depth and richness of information that might otherwise have been missed.

The interview was recorded by the researcher taking notes. At the completion of the interview each participant read through the notes and signed them verifying their authenticity. This process gave the participant the opportunity to add to, change or delete any of the information that was recorded. The interview was also recorded on a Dictaphone, the purpose for this was to assist the researcher when analysing the interviews, if clarification of a point was needed. On average each interview took approximately 40-60 minutes. All 12 interviews were conducted over a three week period.

### **Procedures**

The research project was introduced to staff employed at 'The Company'. They were given the opportunity to voluntarily become involved in the project. At the initial introduction of the research all staff members were given an information sheet, a consent form and an envelope addressed to the researcher.

Once consent forms were completed and returned, the researcher privately approached each participant. They were given the opportunity to ask any questions they might have. Next they were given a copy of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was filled out in the participant's own time and returned to the researcher in a similar method as the consent forms. The returning receptacles for returned consent forms and questionnaires were checked each working day by the researcher. Received communication from participants was not stored or opened in the work place.

Once questionnaires were returned to the researcher they were read and the data was put into a spreadsheet for analysis. The questionnaires were then filed. Consent forms, returned questionnaires and other information was stored at the researcher's home in a locked file and computer data was saved on the researcher's personal lap top. The researcher's lap top was not used in the workplace and was protected by a password. Thus, all information received from participants was kept confidential and away from the workplace.

Interview times were set with each participant once the questionnaires were returned.

At the completion of each interview the transcription notes were written up and filed on the researcher's computer. Dictaphone sound tracks were also downloaded and electronically filed.



## **Data analysis**

A “constant comparative method” was used to initially analyse the collected data (Thomas, 2012, p.171). Thomas expands on this method by explaining all data gathered in both questionnaires and interviews need to be revisited many times and scrutinised thoroughly reviewing all the components gathered as impressions, questions, ideas and comparisons emerge. Yin (1994) suggests setting up a case study database to aid organising all data gained to enable the researcher to develop categories and themes as they emerge.

Thomas (2012) further expanded on the idea of understanding the data gathered by stating ,“We have to study the meanings that people are constructing of the situations in which they find themselves and proceed from these meanings in order to understand the social world” ( p. 171).

At the completion of each interview the transcription notes were written up and filed on the researcher’s computer. Dictaphone sound tracks were also downloaded and electronically filed. All data was saved in duplicate onto an external hard drive to ensure nothing was lost.

A sub-folder for each participant was set up in a ‘Practical Research’ folder. Each participant was allocated a folder, (named P1, P2 etc.), where all information was stored regarding the interview. A second copy of each transcription was made, and re-named “working”. The researcher was able to write notes, highlight important points and begin to analyse the data. (Thomas, 2012, pp. 171-172.) From the working data notes a spreadsheet was set up that

recorded each of the participant's responses to questions in the questionnaire and the interviews. From these, areas of similarities and differences were grouped and coded into different colours as trends emerged. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) refer to these trends as "coding categories" (p. 173). The trends were then further analysed and allocated into three themes; values, training and goals. These three themes naturally occurred as the data was analysed and related directly to the research topic. There were times when the Dictaphone transcripts were listened to for deeper understanding of a point made or to simply re-visit the interview and clarify the information the researcher had recorded.

### **Summary**

Over a period of two weeks most employees at 'The Company' had been introduced to the concept of this research project and given an opportunity to consider participation. Once consent forms were returned questionnaire forms were completed by the 12 confirmed participants and returned to the researcher and the interview was conducted.

Throughout the entire research process ethical guidelines set by the University of Canterbury Ethics Committee were adhered to. Confidentiality and respect for each participant was carefully maintained.

Initial analysis was based on a constant comparative method (Thomas, 2012, p.171). Three themes emerged as the analysis progressed; workplace values, workplace training and workplace goals. These themes will be discussed in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Results**

#### **Introduction**

The 12 participants involved in this research project all completed a questionnaire that consisted of 20 questions. The sections covered areas of; education and work history, current work status and hopes for the future, attitudes and values held towards 'The Company', their positions, training and the future and the type of employee they envisioned themselves to be. A semi-structured interview was conducted after the questionnaire which comprised of a guideline of 10 open-ended questions. Participants had the freedom to tell their own stories and share personal journeys throughout the interview. An analysis of the questionnaire and interview responses indicated three main themes; workplace values, workplace training and work goals.

#### **Methodology**

A soft systems methodology was used to assist with the interpretation of results in this research project. In his paper *Achieving 'Desirable and Feasible' Change: An Application of Soft Systems Methodology*, Peter Checkland, (1985) identifies problems that the author of a case study may face when analysing their data. Firstly the richness of the actual project can never be reproduced. Secondly all events, thoughts and perceptions are interpreted through the eyes of the participants and could in reality be quite different to actuality. Thirdly

there may be a better way of recording the events of the study project than a case study (in other people's eyes).

The soft systems methodology was developed to work with the human aspect of research analysis recognising, “undeterministic, behavioural, pluralist and deontological” properties (Wang & Ahmed, 2003. p. 1284) as opposed to hard systems methodology. Hard systems methodology is primarily “deterministic, rational, unitary and teleological” (Wang & Ahmed, 2003. p.1284). Checkland (1985) discloses that there is no correct or incorrect way of characterising what people do, see or feel.

In this project Checkland's seven stages of soft systems methodology were applied to analysing the data as cited by Thomas, 2011. This involved the following steps:

1. The problem or issue is outlined
2. An attempt is made to organise the problem into its constituent elements.
3. Root definitions of relevant systems
4. Conceptual model – how things might change
5. Compare the ideal with the conceptual model.
6. Look at desirable changes
7. Look at feasible changes

An example of how Checkland's methodology was used in this research project is shown in the numbered points below.

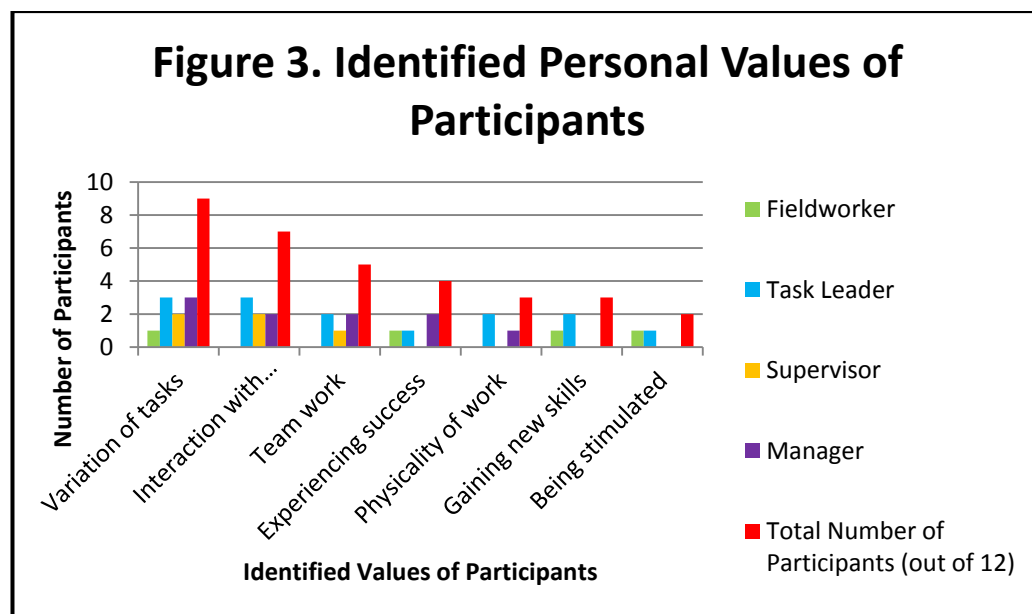
1. Participants were asked during the interview, “Do you have goals that you have set for yourself regarding the work that you do?”
2. All data was collected and the information was transcribed onto a spreadsheet. The participant’s number corresponded with the question. Key words for each participant were recorded in a comments section. When this was completed themes were identified and the responses were condensed. The condensed responses were placed into a new page on the spreadsheet, in this example’s case; goals.
3. Next trends (or root definitions of relevant systems) were identified, such as what type of goal setting did individual participants use?
4. Disappointments recognised by participants were compared with the positive attributes. From these ideas of change were developed.
5. A realistic look at the ideas developed in step 4 was considered.
6. What is desirable?
7. What is feasible?

Steps six and seven will be discussed in the following chapter.

## Personal and Work Values

### Positive attributes

All participants, (P1 – P12), had at least one positive thing to say about their job. Figure 3 shows a summary of the seven most highly rated value attributes identified by participants; variation of tasks, interaction with others, team work, experiencing success, physicality of work, gaining new skills and being stimulated. The graph shows that the fieldworker held four attributes as valuable; variation of tasks, experiencing success, gaining new skills and being stimulated. Task leaders held values in all seven areas identified by the participants, while supervisors identified with three; variation of tasks, interaction with others and team work. Managers identified with four attributes; variation of tasks, interaction with others, team work and physicality of work. Managers identified with four attributes; variation of tasks, interaction with others, team work and physicality of work.



The most highly valued positive attribute identified in this project was variation of task/s, with nine of the participants (P12, fieldworker; P1, P4 and

P10, task leaders; P5 and P9 supervisors; and P3, P8 and P11 managers) rating this attribute as important to them. This was clearly expressed by Participant 9: “I definitely value my job here. I like the variety and appreciate that working here they are quick to value your skill or talent. Everybody's opinions are considered, it's not just lip service.”

The next highest attribute with seven participants (P1, P4 and P10, task leaders; P5 and P9 supervisors; and P3 and P11 managers) rating it highly was interaction with other people. Endorsing this by commenting what was an important aspect of the workplace to them Participant 1 commented: “The people! We all have our moments but at the end of the day we're all here to do the best we can and get on with the work that needs to be done.” The people that were interacted with were not necessarily team members but may have been other employees in ‘The Company’ from different work streams, clients or other contractors on the work site.

Other attributes that rated highly with participants were: enjoying the physical nature of their work ( P1 and P6, task leaders; and P3, manager), team work (P1 and P4, task leaders; P9, supervisor; P8 and P11, managers), learning and attaining new skills (P12, fieldworker; and P1 and P10, task leaders), experiencing success (P12, fieldworker; P7, task leader; and P3 and P8, managers) and being stimulated in their work (P12, fieldworker; and P1 task leader). Participant 4 had this to say about their job: “I like the work aspect; there is a reward as you can see the results of your hard work straight away.”

Traditional values of respect (P4, task leader), loyalty (P10, task leader), trust (P10, task leader), appreciation (P6, task leader), and passion (P8 and P11, managers) did not rate as highly. Each attribute gained one or two participant/s ranking them as important.

Five participants (P12, fieldworker; P1, P4 and P7, task leaders; and P5, supervisor) said they felt gratitude in some way towards 'The Company'.

Participant 12: "Being able to work in a place like this - not everyone gets this opportunity." Four participants (P12, fieldworker; P7, task leader; P5 supervisor; and P11, manager), felt a level of obligation and/or indebtedness either to themselves or to 'The Company'. The two participants (P12, fieldworker; and P5, supervisor), who felt gratitude towards 'The Company' also felt a level of obligation to them in some way. Participant 5: "That I have a job is the bottom line. My job is unique, varied and different. It's enjoyable on a sunny day. I'm grateful that I have a job to go to each day. It's good for the mind and soul. I also have security - financially..."

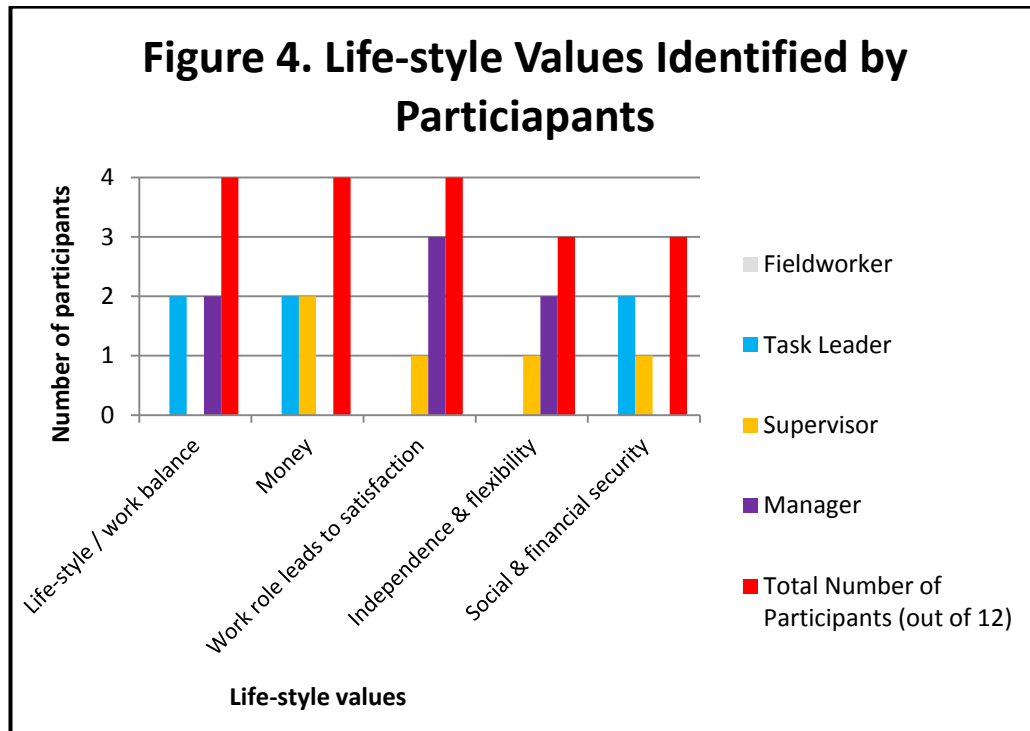
All participants felt positively towards 'The Company' in at least one way. Most attributes identified by participants were personal to themselves. What was considered variety in their work to one participant could be seen differently by another. Out of a total number of 15 identified values task leaders expressed the highest number as valuable (13) out of all the work stream groupings. The other three groups identifying about the same numbers; fieldworkers, 7; supervisors, 6; and managers, 7.



Millennials and Baby Boomers had similar numbers of personal values (12 and 13 respectively) that they considered important in the workplace with Gen X having quite a lot fewer (3).

### **Lifestyle**

Participants identified attributes that contributed to choices in lifestyle, security and job satisfaction as important to them. Figure 4 shows a summary of the number of participants who identified the life-style options that the 12 participants identified as valuable. They were life-style and work balance, money, work roles lead to satisfaction, independence and flexibility and social and financial security. The fieldworker did not identify any life-style attributes as valuable to them. Task leaders identified with three attributes; life-style and work balance, money and social and financial security. Supervisors identified with four of the attributes; money, work role leads to satisfaction, independence and flexibility and social and financial security. Managers identified with three attributes; life-style work balance, work role leads to satisfaction and independence and flexibility.



Four participants (P10 and P7, task leaders; P8 and P11, managers) identified a lifestyle and work balance as important to them. Independence and flexibility in their role was mentioned by three participants (P9, supervisor and P3 and P8, managers) as valuable. Money was important to four participants (P7 and P10, task leaders; and P2 and P5, supervisors) with social and financial security seen as a means for stability for three participants (P6 and P7, task leaders; and P5, supervisor). Participant 7: “My work is my security: financial and social. It's my release. I have a balance of home and work life. I'd like to think it makes me more responsible. I'm willing to look after my job and to do things as they are supposed to be done.” Four participants (P5, supervisor; and P3, P8 and P11, managers) saw their role in ‘The Company’ leading to job satisfaction and this had value for them.

Baby Boomers identified all five identified life-style values as important to them, while Generation X identified three and Millennials two.

### **Responsibility and challenges**

Another area identified as valuable by participants was responsibility and challenges. Four participants (P12, fieldworker; P6 and P10, task leaders; and P2, supervisor) believed it was a joint effort between them and 'The Company' to be responsible in the work place. Acknowledgement that leading and responsibility went hand in hand was identified by three participants (P4 and P7, task leaders; and P5, supervisor). Participant 5: "Yes they can trust me to take on what they appoint me to do and know that it will be done properly. They know that I'll take on a job at hand and give my utmost." Two participants (P7, task leader; and P5, supervisor) desired more responsibility in their roles while (P3 and P8, managers) wanted to be more challenged in the workplace .

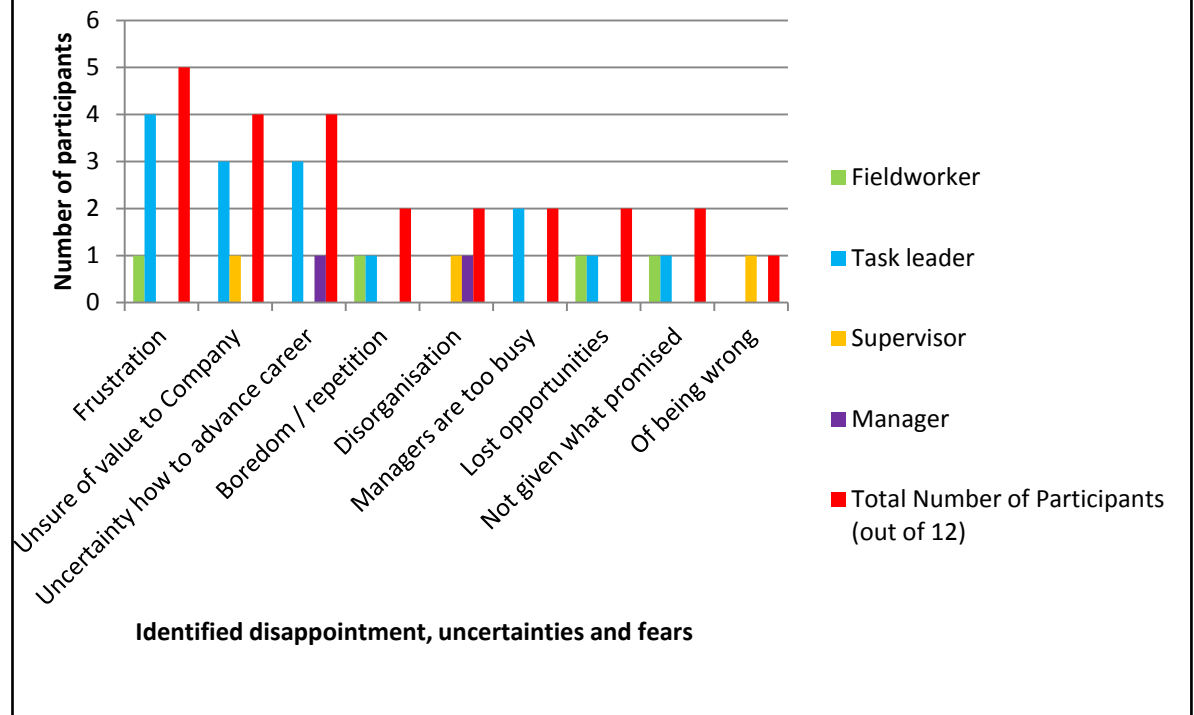
Some of the attributes identified by the participants relied on 'The Company' for their success, some on co-workers or other people and some relied on the individual. It was the participants who were more inclined to undertake fieldwork and/or be responsible for others in the physical workplace (task leaders and supervisors) that identified the role of responsibility as valuable. There were no managers who said they desired more responsibility than what they had however two of the three managers in this project desired to be further challenged in their work.

Baby Boomers identified with four of the four attributes relating to responsibilities and challenges as valuable. Generation X and Millennials identified one each. These were different however with Generation X identifying leading and responsibility as attributes that goes hand in hand in the work place and Millennials wanting to be more challenged in the workplace.

### **Disappointments**

Areas that participants identified as giving disappointment or uncertainty in their work with 'The Company' gave some insight into what they deemed to be important and valuable. Figure 5, shows the ten areas of disappointment, uncertainty and/or fear that the participants identified; frustration, unsure of value to 'The Company', uncertainty of how to advance their career, boredom and/or repetition, disorganisation, managers are too busy, lost opportunities, not being given what was promised (from 'The Company'), and fear of being wrong. The fieldworker identified with four of the attributes; frustration, boredom and/or repetition, lost opportunities and not being given what had been promised. Task leaders identified with seven of the attributes; frustration, unsure of their value to 'The Company', uncertainty of how to advance their career, boredom and/or repetition, managers are too busy, lost opportunities and not being given what was promised. The three attributes the supervisors identified with were; unsure of their value to 'The Company', disorganisation, and fear of being wrong. Managers identified with two of the attributes; uncertainty of how to advance their career and disorganisation.

**Figure 5. Disappointments, Uncertainties and Fears Identified by Participants**



Five participants, (P12, fieldworker; and P1, P6, P7 and P10, task leaders), rated frustration as an attribute that created disappointment or uncertainty. Participant 1 shared the following relating to task leader training: “Task leader training, I got a lot out of that. For me I hadn’t been working as a task leader long – so knowing what ‘The Company’s’ expectations were of me as a task leader was great. It would be good to grow task leader training – maybe on an annual basis? We can catch up and talk but it goes no-where. An open forum to discuss ideas and issues with the managers there would be best. Team meetings are not the forum. A refresher would good idea!”

There were no supervisors or managers who expressed frustration as a cause of disappointment or uncertainty.

Four participants (P1, P6 and P7, task leaders; and P2, supervisor) were uncertain about how much 'The Company' valued them and their role. Being unclear about what was available or relevant from 'The Company' for them to advance in their career created disappointment and uncertainty for four participants (P6, P8 and P10, task leaders; and P11, manager). Participant 6 put it this way: "One year ago I knew where I wanted to be. I was more settled a year ago. There has been a change in this industry that has influenced a change in my thinking. I'm not sure how to make my goals a reality as I like more than one aspect of my job."

Fear was created out of a concern of being wrong in the work that P2 (supervisor) was responsible for. Two participants, (P12, fieldworker; and P10, task leader), said they got bored with a repetition of tasks. Disorganisation created stress according to two participants, (P5, supervisor; and P3, manager). Participant 1 and P6, (both task leaders), thought that management were often too busy to be concerned about their issues at work. Participant 12, (fieldworker), and P8, (manager), both said they had experienced lost opportunities in the workplace and that was a cause of disappointment. Participant 12, (fieldworker), and P6, (task leader), both said they had not been given opportunities that they had been offered or promised by 'The Company'. Participant 12 had this to say about training opportunities: "There has been no training unless you take your own initiative. Only necessities are happening. I think I would have been put on XXX courses. I see these as missed opportunities."

Baby Boomers identified with eight of the identified attributes and Generation X with five. Millennials identified with two of the attributes.

### **Engagement and Development**

Positive attributes, lifestyle choices and responsibilities and challenges at work have all been identified by participants as values that contribute to their engagement in the workplace. The participants (P1, P4 and P7, task leaders) identified having a “good work ethic” as a value they held and they believed they should be engaged in their roles and “do their best” at all times. Participant 7 expressed their values this was: (I want to be) “Doing my job with the best efficiency as I can.” It was also two task leaders, (P1 and P10), who desired to be good workers. While the phrases good worker and good work ethic hold different meanings to different people it would seem very likely in this instance that they infer that for these participants personal values had a positive influence to their engagement at work.

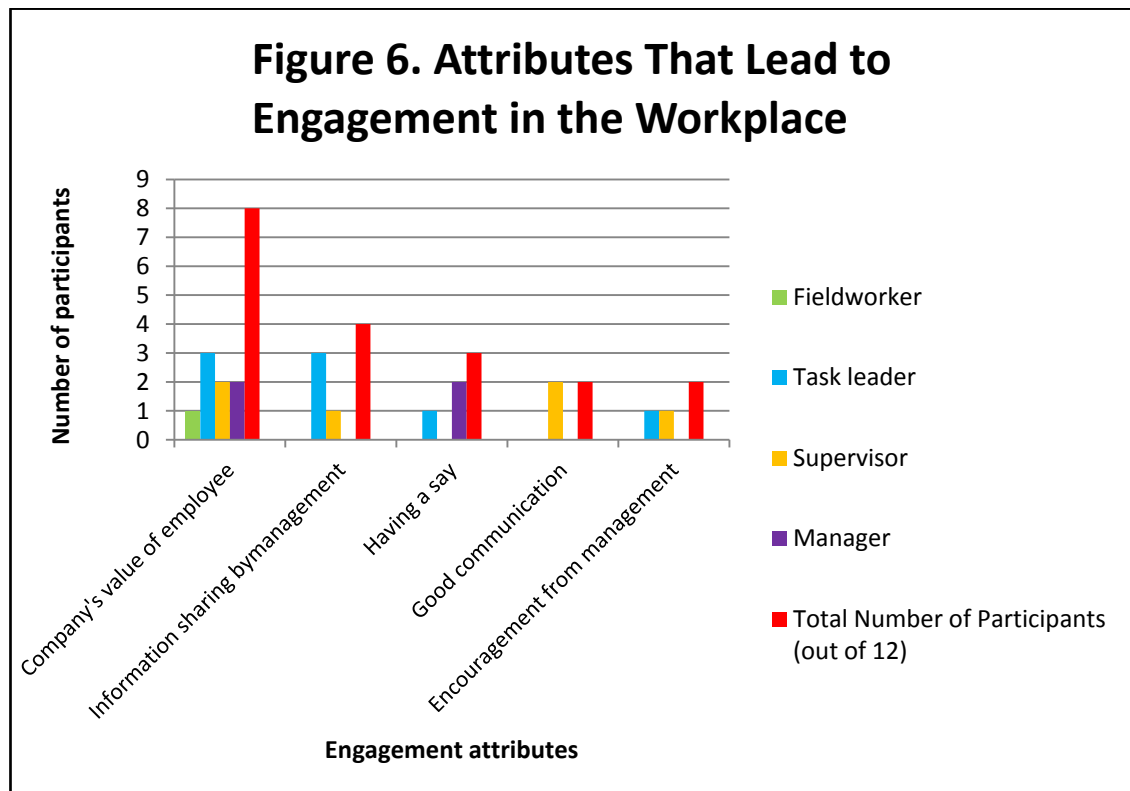
Eight participants (P12, fieldworker; P1, P4 and P7, task leaders; P5 and P9, supervisors and P3 and P11, managers) all expressed with a degree of certainty that the values they believed ‘The Company’ had for them as employees affected their personal attitudes and values towards their work and how they engaged in tasks.

Of the eight participants who believed that the values ‘The Company’ held had an effect on their own values five were Baby Boomers, one Generation X and two were Millennials.

## **Communication**

Communication was identified as an important value for engagement with their work and workplace for some participants. Figure 6 shows the five communication attributes identified by participants that they believed contributed to their engagement in the workplace. They were; 'The Company's' value of the employee, information sharing by management, having a say and making a difference, good communications and encouragement from management. The fieldworker identified with one attribute; 'The Company's' value of the employee. Task leaders identified with four of the five attributes; 'The Company's' value of the employee, information sharing by management, having a say and making a difference, and encouragement from management. Supervisors identified with four attributes; 'The Company's' value of the employee, information sharing by management, good communications and encouragement from management. Managers identified with two attributes; 'The Company's' value of the employee and having a say and making a difference.





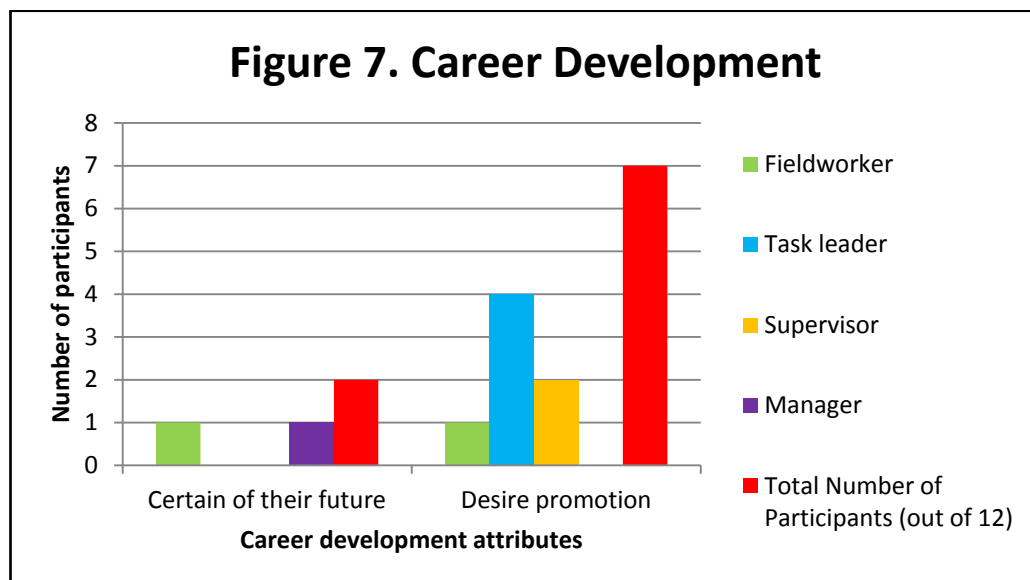
Some of the communication issues raised by participants were: having a say and making a difference (P7, task leader; P3 and P11, managers) and information sharing and being asked by management what they want (P1, P7 and P10, task leaders; and P2, supervisor). Participant 1 (task leader) and P5 and P9 (supervisors) felt there needed to be good communication within 'The Company'. Encouragement by management was desired from P1 (task leader), and P2 (supervisor).

Three of the four attributes relate to the role of management either in 'The Company' or their relationships with staff. Of the four communication attributes raised by participants the fieldworker did not identify any of them, task leaders identified all four as valuable, supervisors three and managers one.

Baby Boomers identified all four attributes as valuable. Generation X identified one and Millennials two.

### Career Development

The future direction of their careers was a certainty for two of the 12 participants. Figure 7 shows the two hopes that participants have identified for career development; certainty of their career's future and desiring promotion. The fieldworker identified with both attributes and task leaders identified with desiring promotion. Supervisors desired promotion and managers with a certainty of the future of their career. Of the seven participants desiring promotion one was Millennial and the other six were Baby Boomers. That there were no managers seeking or hoping for promotion is not surprising because apart from the general manager this is the highest work stream attainable at 'The Company'.



One participant who was certain about their future was P12 (fieldworker) a university graduate and one of the younger participants (Millennial) in this project. P12 strongly valued the opportunities that were available and expressed the attitude of being hard working so that results could be produced. Participant 12 indicated quite strongly that the current position held with 'The Company' was a job and a means to career development. Another participant, P11 (manager) was also among the younger participants (Millennial) in this project. This participant valued passion and said this gave drive to individual attitudes and also gave reflection of you as a person. Participant 11 identified with 'The Company' and spoke about being a "company person" who would stay with 'The Company, "until the death of me or the death of 'The Company'".

Seven participants (P12, fieldworker; P1, P4, P6 and P7, task leaders; and P5 and P9 supervisors) expressed that promotion within 'The Company' was a goal that they hoped to achieve. Participant 7 specified that they thought experience and a good work ethic were important values and that they would be contributing factors for them. Participant 7: "To step up the ladder, I'd like to be a Supervisor up here, no more than that 'cause I want to be in the field not the office." Participant 7 also expressed that they would like to become involved in an area of interest to them in the workplace but at the moment it wasn't looking promising. Another participant considered the way they considered their future this way, participant 4: "I'd like to further my position, maybe, as I get older and get into a 'better' position. I'd like a supervisory role." Participant 4 said they valued the experiences they had in the past, both in New Zealand and

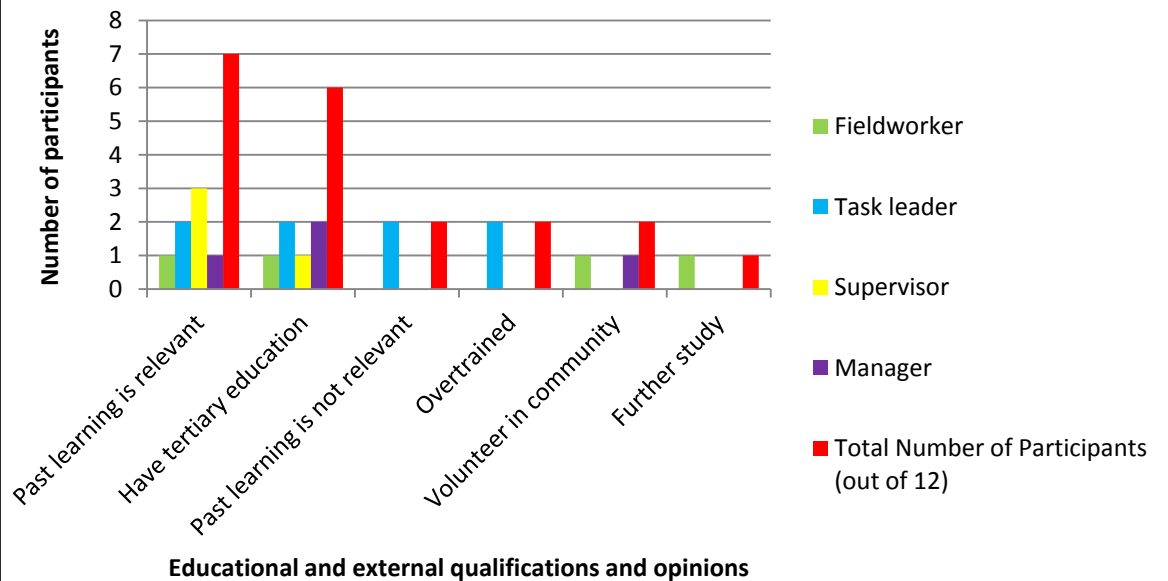
overseas and believed they enriched their value as an employee. Participant 10, task leader, felt that expecting promotion was not a personal responsibility. This participant thought that ‘The Company’ should recognise attributes and reward personnel accordingly. Participant 10: “I don’t want to ask to move up the ladder, I hope to be recognised for what I do. I’m loyal – I’ve been with the company almost 5 years now – that should count for something!”

## **Workplace Training**

### **Educational and external qualifications**

Eight of the 12 participants either strongly agreed (P8, manager) or agreed (P12, fieldworker; P4, and P6 task leaders; P2, P3 and P9, supervisors; and P11, manager) that past learning was relevant to their current positions held at ‘The Company’. Figure 8 shows a summary of the educational and external qualifications and the opinions of them held by the participants.

**Figure 8. Educational and External Qualifications of Participants**



Those who agreed that past learning was important were one fieldworker with a University degree (P12), two task leaders one who gained University Entrance at school (P4) and P6 who left school without any qualifications. Participant 6 went straight to work after leaving school but later realised that without qualifications would be unable to get the type of work wanted. This participant decided to further their education by completing a Polytechnic course as an adult student. Participant 6: “I found myself not happy with the part time work, (that I had), I had no real qualifications just life experience.” Also agreeing that past learning was important were two supervisors; one with a University degree (P9) and the other with School Certificate (P2) and two managers one who gained School Certificate (P3) and the other Tertiary qualifications in Australia (P11). The manager (P8) who strongly agreed with the importance of educational attainment had completed post graduate studies.

Participant 8: “I have a passion for education. It’s the way forward because it engages people and offers opportunities. That’s personal growth and it’s exciting.”

Three participants (P7, task leader; and P2 and P5, supervisors) did not agree or disagree that their qualifications were relevant to their current positions. All three of these participants left secondary school after gaining School Certificate. They believed they had adequate skills and the actual work that they did was, in their opinions, learned on-the-job and not from past formal learning experiences. Participant 7 had this to say about learning in the workplace: “Its hands on up here what you learn and/or do at school is wiped. You have to learn new aspects up here. It's different.”

Two task leaders disagreed (P1) or strongly disagreed (P10) that there were any benefits from their qualifications to be gained in their current positions. Participant 1 gained School Certificate and P10 had completed a Polytechnic course that was unrelated to the work that they did for ‘The Company’.

Two participants (P1 and P10, task leaders) strongly agreed that they did not require any external qualifications for their current position with ‘The Company’. Participant 10 had a Polytechnic diploma which was not related to their current line of work with ‘The Company’. When asked about this P10 responded this way: “ I was offered a full time job with ‘The Company’ so I opted to take that as it was very expensive to live in the XXX area and at that time there seemed to be no full time ‘trained career’ positions available. I don’t

regret not working at what I trained for, this job works well for me at this stage.” Another two participants moderately agreed that they did not require any external qualifications (P7, a task leader and P8, a manager). Participant 8: “In my role my previous experiences and learning have been the required qualification for me to be able to do this job to the standard required. I am very sure there are studies I could do to assist me but not essential.”

One task leader, (P4), strongly disagreed and one supervisor (P9) and one manager (P11) moderately disagreed believing that external qualifications were important in their current positions. Participant 4: “Yes, any job can impact into any other job. It all gives you qualifications in life. The more diverse you are in this day and age the better you'll get on. I have overseas experiences and labouring skills. All work is like a learning skill to give you diverse and a wide variety of skills across the board.” Five participants, (P12, fieldworker; P6, task leader; P2 and P5, supervisors; and P3, manager) did not have a strong opinion either way about external qualifications.

Six participants had undertaken tertiary education of some kind. P12 (fieldworker) had a University degree, P6 and P10 (task leaders) had Polytechnic diplomas, P9 (supervisor) had two University degrees while P11 (manager) had business diplomas and P8 (manager) had completed Post Graduate studies. Participant 9 had this to say about University qualifications: “University degrees teach theory but doing practical work you get to refine and hone skills.”

One participant (P12, field worker) noted that there are costs for employees who want to undertake “higher” education. These can be psychological, financial, social, loss of employment opportunities or even their current position itself. Participant 12: “... but what I want to achieve is long-term study. I would have to leave my job to undertake something like Post Graduate study. If I left I'd be letting 'The Company' down, they've invested in me, but I've invested in them too.”

Two participants (P4 and P10, both task leaders) felt that they were over-trained for their positions. Participant 4: “The training that I have had is better than what I need for the work that I do.” Another participant (P1, task leader) thought that any training they received wouldn't improve their ability to carry out the tasks that they perform as part of their work. Participant 1 also thought that although tool box talks are a standard method of training and information sharing in the work place they were often a waste of time and staff could learn better in other ways.

Two participants (P12, field worker; and P11, manager) have done or currently do work in a voluntary capacity on community projects. They both believed that they not only did the community benefit but also their personal skill levels and that these were useful, in varying degrees, in their particular work situations. Participant 11: “Volunteer work complements my work and career training ... I believe that all volunteer work (that I do) builds to develop the governance and management skills that I require for work. My personal life-style choices, (health and fitness), tie into ALL the above.”



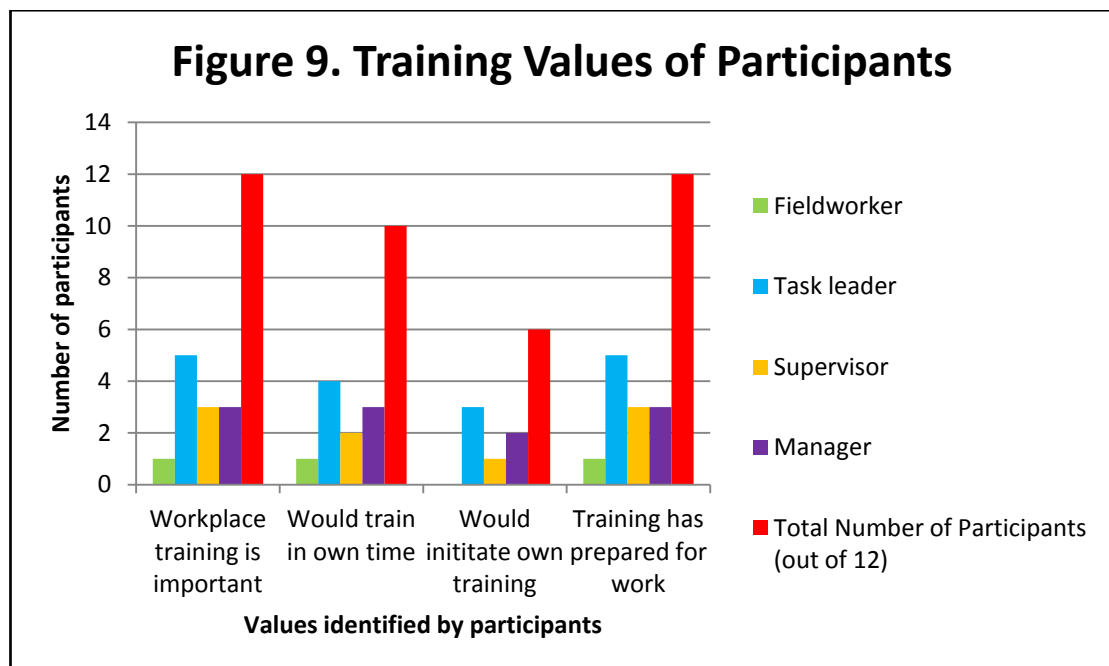
Overall, the participants who have completed tertiary education acknowledge that there are benefits for them from the education they have had and that the qualifications they have gained are valuable in some way in their current position. These were the fieldworker, one supervisor and two managers. One of the task leaders who had a Polytechnic diploma disagreed believing that the qualification they did not add value to their current position.

The participants who valued their tertiary qualifications were equally from Baby Boomers and Millennials with two participants representing each generational group. The two task leaders who did not value their qualifications as relevant in their current positions were one each from Baby Boomers and Millennials. It was noted by one participant (Millennial) that to progress with or continue to gain tertiary qualifications there was a price to pay, which could ultimately cost them their job.

Academic skills and qualifications were seen as unnecessary in the workplace by some participants who suggested practical skills and life experiences were more valuable. This value was mostly held by task leaders who spend most of their working day in practical and physical tasks. The two participants who voluntarily gave skills and time into their communities had tertiary qualifications and were Millennials. They recognised that there were values and benefits to be gained from volunteering for them individually as well as for 'The Company' and the positions that they held in it.

## Training Values

All participants agreed that workplace training was important. Figure 9 shows the four training values that participants in this project identified; workplace training is important, they would be prepared to undertake training in their own time, they would initiate their own training and the training that they have had has prepared them for the work that they currently do at ‘The Company’. The fieldworker identified with three of the attributes; workplace training is important, they would train in their own time and training has prepared them for their current job. Task leaders, supervisors and managers identified with all four attributes.



Ten participants (P12, fieldworker; P1, P4, P6, P7 and P10 task leaders; P5; supervisor and P3, P8 and P11 managers) all strongly agreed that workplace

training was important and two supervisors (P2 and P9) moderately agreed. Four of the participants (P12, field worker; P4 and P6, task leaders; and P8 manager) strongly agreed that training was important for them to get ahead in their careers and current jobs. They conceded that if necessary they were prepared to undertake training in their own time, if that is what it takes to advance. Six participants (P6 and P10, task leaders; P2 and P5, supervisors and P3 and P11, managers) moderately agreed they would train in their own time to advance their job or career. One participant (P1, task leader) didn't feel strongly one way or the other but P9, a supervisor moderately disagreed.

Participants were asked if they were prepared to initiate any training for themselves and their responses were slightly different from those mentioned above. Those who strongly agreed they would initiate training were two task leaders (P4 and P7) and one manager (P3). Three participants moderately agreed (P6, task leader; P5, supervisor; and P11, manager). Those who did not have a strong opinion one way or the other were P12, fieldworker and P10, task leader. Participant 1, task leader, strongly disagreed and P9, supervisor, moderately disagreed. Seven of the participants held the same opinion when considering if training was necessary for them to get ahead in their jobs and careers and whether they were prepared to initiate training for themselves (P4, P6 and, P7, task leaders; P5 and P9, supervisors; P8 and P11, managers). Four of the participants had different opinions, three stating that while they believed that they needed workplace training to get ahead in their jobs or careers they were not necessarily prepared to learn and train under their own initiative and in their own time (P12, fieldworker; P10 task leader; and P2 supervisor). The

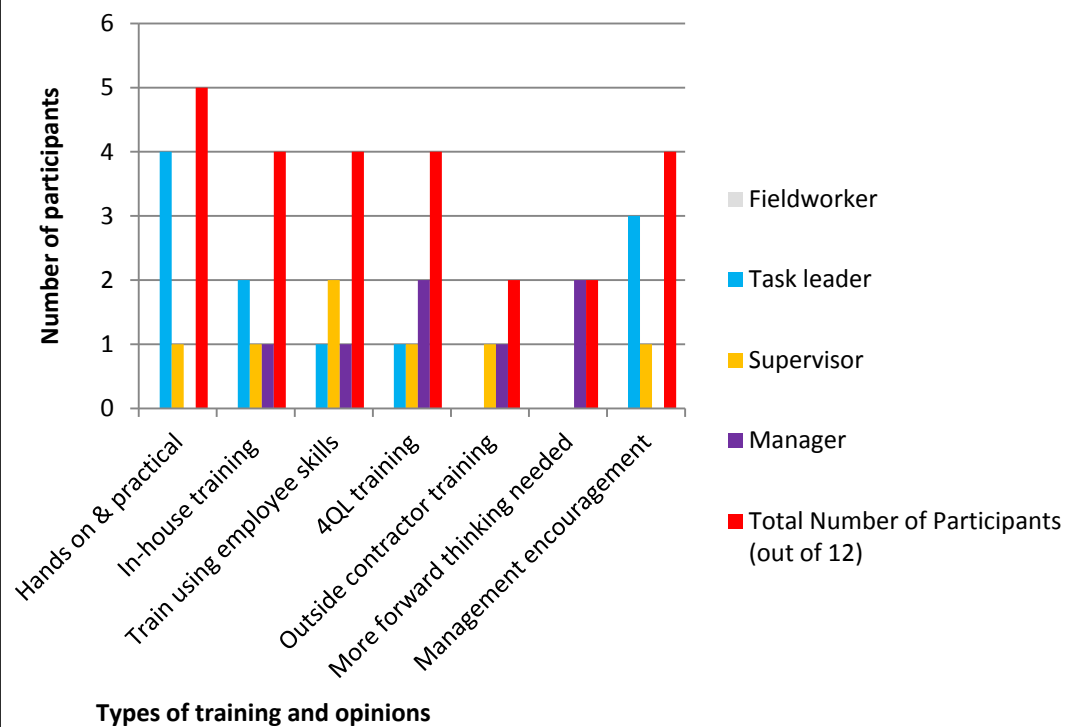
fourth participant (P3, manager) said that they strongly agreed they would undertake training or learning in their own time, a move up from moderately agreeing that to get ahead in their job and career they needed further training.

Participant 12, field worker, strongly agreed that although they wanted as much training as 'The Company' offered there were also other training options to look at. Moderately agreeing with this concept were four task leaders (P4, P6, P7 and P8), two supervisors (P5 and P9), and all three managers (P3, P8 and P11). Participant 6: "I used my own initiative and up-skilled my computer skills, especially spreadsheet formulas. I did this to make the job easier for me and it also cuts down the time taken to complete tasks that I have." Two participants had no strong opinion one way or the other (P1, task leader and P2, supervisor).

### **Training methods and opportunities**

All twelve participants (P1- P12) said the training that they had received from 'The Company' prepared them well for the daily tasks that they undertook in the workplace. Figure 10 shows a summary of the opinions that participants held about the types of training that they had either received or been offered while an employee with 'The Company'. Seven training types or methods were identified; hands-on and practical, in-house training, training using current employee skills, 4QL training, outside contractor training, more forward thinking of training needed and management need to encourage employees with training.

**Figure 10. Participant Opinions of Types of Training Offered**



Those who strongly agreed that they had received adequate training were P12 (fieldworker), P4 and P10 (task leaders), and P5 (supervisor). Those who moderately agreed were three task leaders (P1, P4 and P7), two supervisors (P2 and P9) and three managers (P3, P8 and P11). ‘The Company’ offered participants a variety of training options which included; in-house training, practical on-the-job training, classroom based training and out sourced courses.

One supervisor (P5) and four task leaders (P1, P4, P7 and P10) indicated that they thought hands-on and practical training was the best way to learn. These five participants have responsibilities out in the field that regularly

requires ensuring tasks are completed to a high standard for clients. That includes being responsible for other teams members to complete the job to required standards. Participant 1, a task leader said about practical training: “Hands on training is best. I’ve never liked sitting in a room, looking at a whiteboard there’s no interaction.” Participant 4, another task leader built on participant 1’s idea by saying: “I’d like to see a 35/65% split between theory and practical this would work for field work and practical work...” (They then went on to identify it might not work so well for office staff.) Participant 10, a field worker strongly, said: “We should have hands on training, not so much theory. Most of ‘The Company’s’ workers are outdoorsy types, they are physical and actually do stuff NOT read through procedures”. The field worker and managers did not comment in their interviews that they preferred hands-on learning above another method.

In-house training was valued by seven participants, three task leaders (P1, P4, and P7), two supervisors (P2 and P5), and two managers (P3 and P11). One manager (P11) thought: “Some of the benefits of in-house training are that you are with mates, in ‘The Company’ environment, there is a low risk to personnel and trainers and management can identify those people who need extra help.” One initiative ‘The Company’ had was training for task leaders. This was identified as a good training method by four participants; two task leaders (P1 and P7), one supervisor (P5) and one manager (P11). It is worth mentioning that although P5 was a supervisor at the time of this project, they have worked as a task leader before promotion and have completed task leader training. Participant 1(task leader) affirmed the concept of in-house training and

thought that task leaders should be used to give training to others. Participant 11(manager) identified the following, “In-house training can be targeted and tailor-made for example, task leader competency. If you have volume of staff, training can be targeted, specific and have staff input”. Three of the task leaders (P4, P6 and P10) did not mention any value gained from the task leader training. Task leader training is not available for field workers, but seen as part of the qualification package offered by ‘The Company’ as a step-up into a new role.

Four participants (P7, task leader; P5 and P2, supervisors; and P3, manager) said that they would like to see ‘The Company’ use skills that current employees in training situations for other employees. Supporting this idea P9 (supervisor) thought that ‘The Company’ should build on what they already had in place rather than consider new ideas.

Another method of training undertaken by ‘The Company’ has been Four Quadrant Leadership (4QL) training. Four participants (P6, task leader; P5, supervisor; and P3 and P9, managers) identified this as a good training method. 4QL training is a leadership training programme run by out-sourced professionals. ‘The Company’ selects those employees that are considered suitable to take the course. It is not available to field workers and in recent times not for task leaders either. All supervisory and management staff employed with ‘The Company’ at the time of this project have had 4QL training.

Two participants (P9, supervisor; and P11, manager) have received training from outside contractors in one-to-one learning situations, tailor made to fit their circumstances. They thought this was good value for 'The Company's' investment in their training. Participant 11 thought this about one-to-one training: "'The Company' have leaned on professional services for one-to-one training, which I believe is better than some other training options – it is specific and targeted to 'The Company'.

Two participants (P8 and P11, both managers) expressed the desire to see more forward outside the square thinking as 'The Company' moves forward. Participant 8: "It (training) has to be effective. It should meet people's passions and be what people want. Maybe we need to go slightly off centre. There are things that we haven't thought of yet that would complement 'The Company's' current range of services. They'd have to, so that what comes back will change 'The Company'. We should be anticipating and hoping for positive change. Yes, I think we are a forward thinking crew."

Four participants (P1, P6 and P7 task leaders and P2, supervisor) would like to see management give more encouragement to employees. Participant 5(supervisor) and P3 (manager) had the view that there was a risk of low staff morale due to lack of training follow up. Participant 1, (task leader) thought that supervisors should be out in the field on a more regular basis and following up on training that staff had. Giving a management perspective P11 had this to say; "The task leader training was started but the tap was turned off fast. This has impacted on staff morale. It may have given the message that 'The Company' is



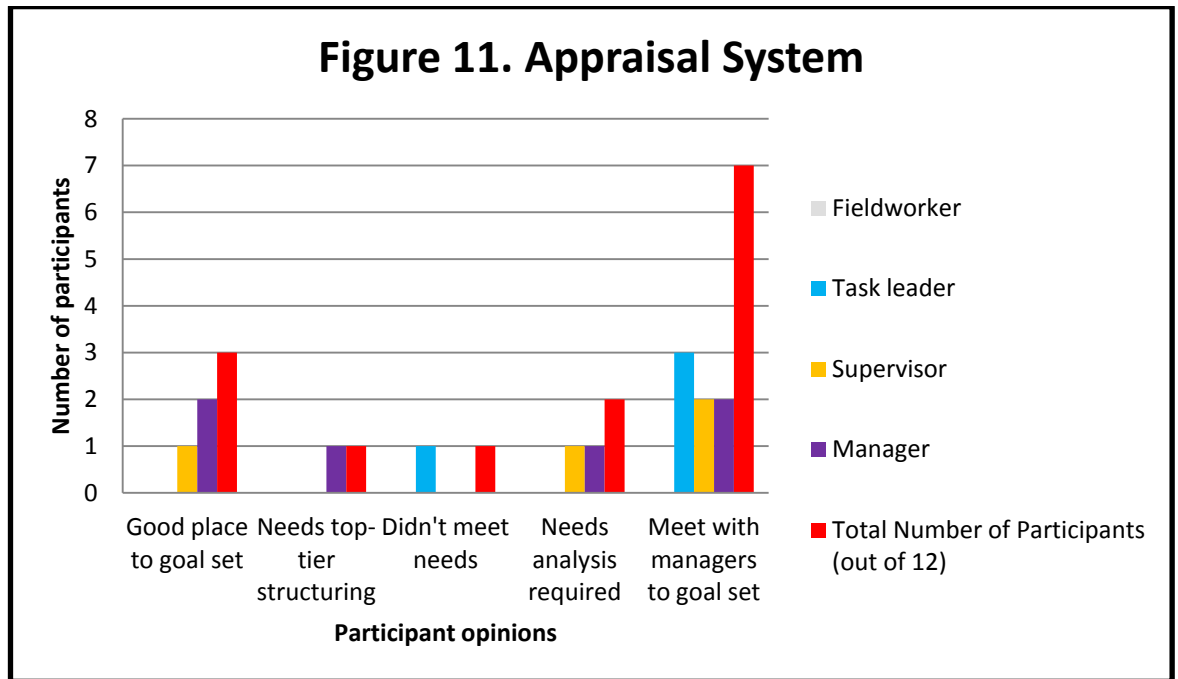
here when times are good but not when they are tough – this is not true. Next time we'll be able to make better decisions.”

One participant (P9, supervisor) expressed the desire to see employees exposed to situations and environments outside of their current roles to further their training and professional development. Another participant (P2, supervisor) thought all employees should be given opportunities to experience a variety of tasks across ‘The Company’ regardless of their departments. Mentoring was identified by P11 (manager) as a great way to complement classroom and practical learning. It was also perceived by one participant (P12, field worker) that more “bottom-up” training was needed as ‘The Company’ tended to train its more experienced staff members. P3 (manager) thought that ‘The Company’ should be preparing for the next generation of leadership.

All participants identified the training that they had received as suitable for the tasks that they undertook on a daily basis. Participants discerned in different ways that there was some room for improvement in training opportunities.

### **Appraisal System**

All staff employed at ‘The Company’ has an annual appraisal with their manager. Figure 11 gives a summary of the way that participants viewed the appraisal system.



Three participants (P5, supervisor; P8 and P11, managers) thought that during their appraisal was a good place to goal set and discuss training opportunities. One participant (P11, manager) held the view that the appraisal system was still developing as the top tier of management structure in ‘The Company’ did not have their needs met well. Participant 1 (task leader) believed that their needs were not met by the appraisal system.

Two participants (P9, supervisor; and P8, manager) felt that appraisals and job descriptions required a needs analysis to ascertain how to develop the appraisal system further. Participant 9: “I’d conduct a review of the individuals we have and the skills that they have. Then I’d look to matching up this information with job descriptions and tasks. I’d undertake a jobs needs analysis. I’d look for any glaring matches or mismatches. Then I’d develop training through those. I’m not sure how effective we are at taking information and making reality”.

When worded differently and participants were asked about meeting with their managers to set work goals rather than the appraisal process participants gave quite different responses. Seven participants (P1, P4 and P6, task leaders; P2 and P5 supervisors; and P3 and P11, managers) strongly agreed that they valued this one to one time while three participants (P12, field worker; and P7 and P10, task leaders) moderately agreed. One supervisor (P9) and one manager (P8) did not have a strong opinion on this topic.

Time spent with their manager and the opportunity to discuss work training and goals is valued by most participants. Participant 5: “At my appraisal with (The General Manager) on the part about goal setting... I want and need to become more aware of the knowledge I need to know to complete the work I do.”

The participants who valued workplace training were representative of all work streams at ‘The Company’ fieldworkers (1), task leaders (5), supervisors (1), and managers (3). Some participants would undertake training in their own time fieldworkers (1), task leaders (2), supervisors (2), and managers (2). This was representative of all generational groupings Baby Boomers (6), Generation X (1) and Millennials (3). It was mainly task leaders who had an opinion about the amount of experiential learning or practical training that should be used in workplace training opposed formal learning. Most of the task leaders were Baby Boomers with the exception of one Millennial.

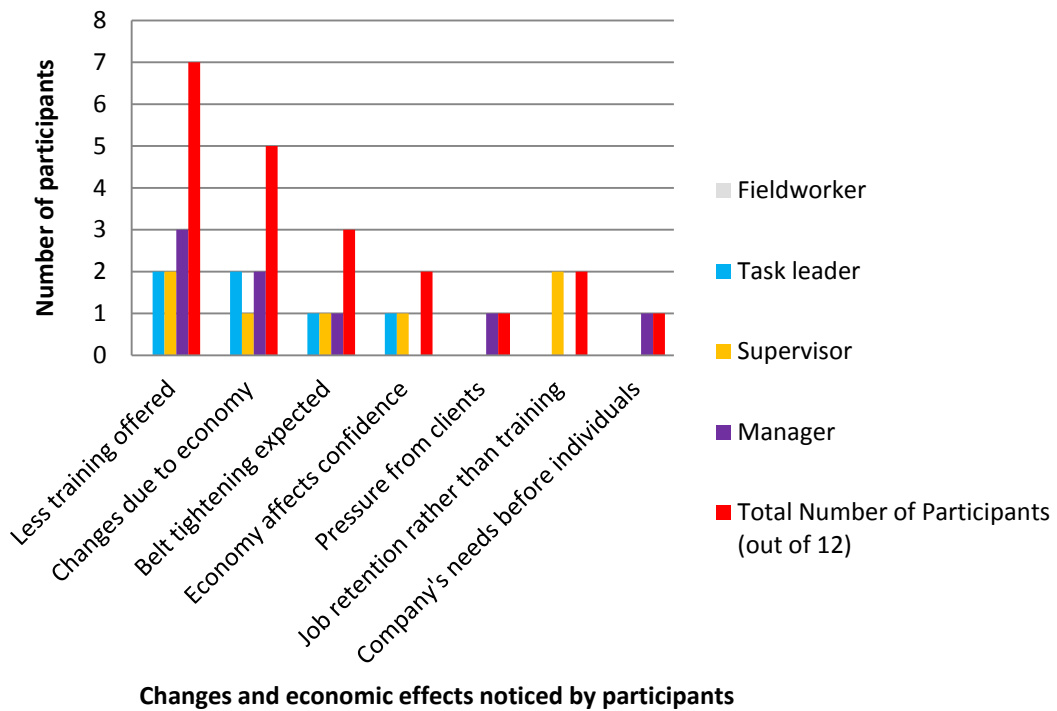
Seven of the 12 participants identified in-house training as a method that met their needs, 'The Company's' and clients'. It was primarily supervisors and managers who saw the bigger picture relating to training with fieldworkers and task leaders having a more personalised picture. Two supervisors identified ways they thought that training could improve with wider experiences and broader ranges of training while P11 (manager) thought that a mentoring system would be valuable. There was also recognition from participants that some training initiatives could have been presented in better ways to them.

## **Workplace Changes**

### **Impact on training**

It had been noticed by seven participants (P3 and P7, task leaders; P5 and P8, supervisors; and P3, P8 and P11, managers) that it seemed that less training had been offered to employees over recent times. Figure 12 shows the changes and economic effects that have been identified by the participants; less training offered, changes due to economic climate, belt tightening to be expected, economy affects employee confidence, pressure from clients, 'The Company's' needs go before the individuals and employees are more concerned with keeping their jobs than training and up-skilling.

**Figure 12. Workplace Changes and the Economy**



Five participants (P4 and P7, task leaders; P9, supervisor; and P3 and P11, Managers) attributed changes in training opportunities to the current economic climate. Three participants (P4, task leader; P5 supervisor; and P3, manager) stating that “belt-tightening” by ‘The Company’ was to be expected. Participant 9 (supervisor) saw the decline in staff training this way: “There is definitely less training now than there used to be. I don’t believe that this is necessarily financially driven. If a great course came up and it was best fit ‘The Company’ would probably go for it. People aren’t looking at development opportunities they are more concerned with their jobs.” Two participants (P6, task leader; and P2, supervisor) felt that economic times affected their

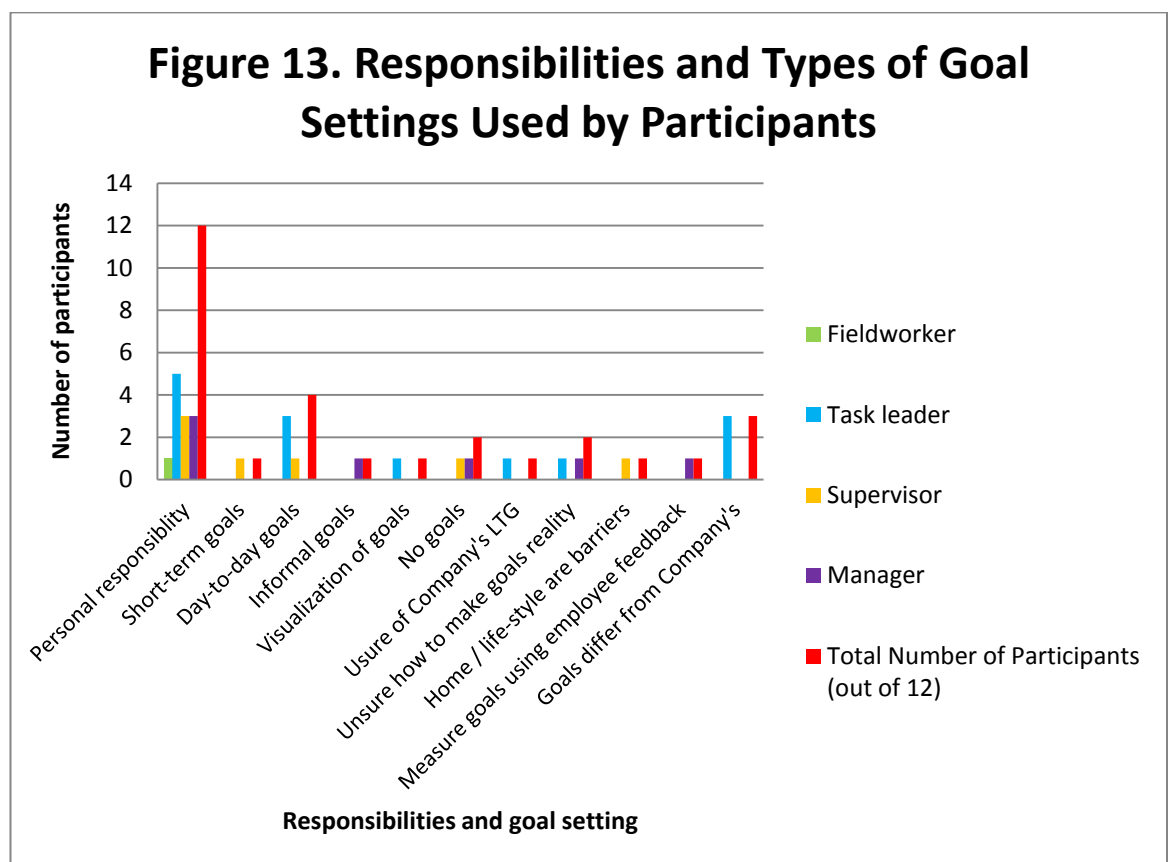
confidence and opportunities for training and career development or promotion. Concern was expressed by P11 (manager) that there was pressure from clients to get jobs done. This participant also thought that 'The Company's' needs rather than those of the individual was often the driver for staff training. It was stated that training could lead to lost production and it does cost 'The Company' financially. Participant 11: "If you aren't engaged when you walk in the door training is a waste of time. Training is expensive for 'The Company', lost wages and lost turn over. There is pressure from clients to get the job done." One participant (P5, supervisor) thought that employees didn't want to focus on skill development they were more concerned with keeping their jobs. Participant 5: "...disheartening, things are tighter now, there are worried people. Staff have more focus on the fact that they are working, they put their heads down and do the job with the knowledge they have at the present time."

Most participants believed there had been some changes in training at 'The Company' over recent times, leading to a down-turn in training opportunities. This change was acknowledged in a variety of ways; some saying it was to be expected while others conceded that it impacted on confidence and opportunities. One of the managers indicated that there is a cost to 'The Company' for every training opportunity that is made available for staff. It was also pointed out that there is sometimes pressure on 'The Company' from clients to get tasks completed and this can and does affect the type of training offers that are available for employees.

## Personal and Work Goals

### Goal Setting

All participants (P1-P12) considered it was their personal responsibility to see their goals become a reality. Figure 13 shows a summary of the types of goals participants were inclined to set and barriers and responsibilities for goals in work related situations.



Participant 9 had the following to say about goals in the workplace: “It’s my responsibility to make my goals become a reality.” The types of goals that participants set varied; one (P5, supervisor) set short term goals and four (P1, P4 and P6, task leaders; and P9, supervisor) set day-to-day goals.

Participant 6: “I set myself goals every day.” Participant 8 (manager) set informal goals and P4 (task leader) visualised the task that needed to be done and then set goals to achieve them. Two participants (P2, supervisor; and P3, manager) said they didn’t set any goals as far as their work was concerned. Participant 3: “I don’t have any formal goals – I work on ‘gut feelings’. I want to feel challenged, not surplus to needs.”

Participant 12 (fieldworker) differentiated between job and career goals. This participant saw their job with ‘The Company’ as a step in their career development and because of this had differing goals for both. Participant 12: “Work: I had no goals when I came to ‘The Company’. I had aspirations and wanted to achieve them; to be more respected so that I could be trusted and given independence with my day-to-day work. Career: Yes; work experience, and then back to University, (this has changed). I have no specific goals but this job won’t be where I end up. I know I’m passionate about this sort of work. Goals: These are my personal responsibility, I need to take initiative. The right people will trust me and get to know me better. Work has a responsibility as well; if they don’t direct me, then I won’t be able to take another step further. Company Goals: Yes, they want me to take more responsibility; I need to show them I can.”

One participant (P4, task leader) believed that ‘The Company’ had a long term goal for them but didn’t know what that was. Three participants (P6, P7 and P10, all task leaders) thought that the goals they had and those that ‘The Company’ had for them differed.



Two participants (P6 task leader; and P8, manager) said they had goals they would like to achieve but were unsure how to make them a reality. Goals should be measured using employee feedback according to one participant (P8, manager). Another participant (P5, supervisor) felt that their lifestyle and home life could be a barrier to achieving the work goals they set.

Different participants had varying types of goal setting with two saying they did not set any work related goals. Seven of the twelve participants had promotion within 'The Company' as a goal. There were no managers seeking promotion. Participant 10 (task leader) hinted that promotion was a goal but would not be actively sought, believing it was 'The Company's' responsibility to recognise their skills. All participants, excluding managers, were seeking or hoping for promotion in 'The Company'.

### **Length of Employment**

Working for 'The Company' medium to long term (3+ years) was a goal for seven participants (P1, P4 and P7, task leaders; P5, supervisor; and P8, P9 and P11, managers). Three participants (P12, field worker; P10, task leader; and P3, manager) saw their job as a short term prospect (3 years or less). Outside influences would affect their decision for short or long term employment with 'The Company' according to three participants (P6, task leader; P2 and P9 supervisors).

One participant (P10, task leader) believed that it would be important to leave working for 'The Company' on good terms in case they might want re-

employment in the future. Another participant (P8, manager) said they would use the skills gained in their current employment with 'The Company' if they were forced to find new employment rather than pursue their trained career. Participant 4 (task leader) considered that planning for getting older was necessary as age would impact on the type of work that could be undertaken in the future.

Most participants considered that they would be working for 'The Company' for at least three years, or longer. There were some outside factors that contributed to the decision-making process for some of the participants regarding their future with 'The Company'. Many of these factors were out of the control of the individual participants and included such things as family, other interests and age.

### **Career types**

When considering the three principle career types of traditionalist, protean and boundaryless it proved to be challenging to find the career type for participants as there was a tendency for them to have traits of more than one category. Of the 12 participants four (P4, P7 and P10, task leaders; and P5, supervisor) were mainly traditional in their personal expectations of themselves as employees and of 'The Company' towards them. However, three of those four (P4 and P10, task leaders, and P5, supervisor) displayed some traits that fitted into a boundaryless career type. Seven participants (P12, fieldworker; P6, task leader; P2 and P9, supervisors; and P3, P8 and P11, managers), displayed mostly characteristics of the protean career type. Again this was not completely

true for four of those seven, (P12, fieldworker; P6, task leader; and P3 and P8, managers), who exhibited traits of the boundaryless career type. Participant 1 (task leader) was the only participant in this project who displayed true boundaryless career type traits.

The generational groupings for the four traditionalist career types were three Baby Boomers and one Millennial. From the traditionalist group two Baby Boomers and one Millennial also showed some boundaryless career type characteristics. Of the seven protean career types there were four Baby Boomers, one Generation X and two Millennials. Five participants from this group displayed some boundaryless characteristics, three Baby Boomers, one Generation X and one Millennial. The one boundaryless participant was a Baby Boomer.

Due to the overlapping of the career types further breakdown was made to identify the career profiles. This was undertaken in consultation with the medium to high likelihood combinations of protean and boundaryless career types that were developed by Briscoe and Hall (2006). To group participants into the most suitable category each participant's exposition of their career pathways were analysed according to the information given during this project. The results are shown in table 6.

Table 6

*Career profiles of the participatory group*

	Fieldworker	Task Leader	Supervisor	Manager	Total (out of 12)
<b>Lost / Trapped</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Fortressed</b>	0	1	1	0	2
<b>Wanderer</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Idealist</b>	0	2	0	0	2
<b>Organization man/woman</b>	0	1	1	0	2
<b>Solid Citizen</b>	0	0	1	1	2
<b>Hired Hand</b>	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Protean</b>	1	0	0	2	3
<b>Career Architect</b>					

## Participant Career Profiles

The following bullet points entail information about one participant from each career profile by way of example for each category to indicate the reasons why they fit into the category they have been placed in.

- **Fortressed** – P10 is in the Millennial generational group and a task leader. This participant holds traditional values such as loyalty, honesty and being a good worker and appreciates learning, getting new skills and interacting with other people. P10 believes 'The Company' should reward the individual for their service and P10 has stated that they would not ask for promotion, even though it is desired. P10 is unsure what type of training is available to them or how to advance their career. P10: "I value it, (my job), I like people and my job is reasonably stable with a regular income...I (want to) be no trouble and do my work to an acceptable standard."
- **Idealist** – P7 is in the Baby Boomer generational group and is a task leader. Participant 7 believes in the importance of having a healthy work and lifestyle balance, earning enough money to support that lifestyle and receiving stability in life from social and financial security. This participant desired promotion and while not prepared to move physically was willing to cross into other departments to increase personal knowledge and skill levels. P7: "My job here is up high on my values, without a job you haven't got a life. I've been stuck in the XXX for years and I finally have the job I want. I know what it's like to be at home all the time."
- **Organisational person** – P2 is in the Baby Boomer generational group and is a supervisor. Participant 2 desires to be happy at work without any stress. This participant does not set any work goals and there is a sense this participant has some uncertainties about their work role and values. Participant 2 acknowledged that training was important however it was communicated they were content to be stable in their current work, although willing to cross departments if required. P2: "I get paid. The people I work with (make this a) good working environment. (I have) less stress this relates back to my working environment. Yes, it's a positive."
- **Solid citizen** – P11 is in the Millennial generational group and is a manager. This participant values working in a team, interacting with other people and having a work and lifestyle balance. Participant11 is strongly community minded and totally committed to 'The Company'. Their work is varied and stimulating; however there is not any consideration given to moving physically for career advancement. P11: "It's a people business ('The Company'). It affects your drive to get up and go to work. I'm here to help people for the greater good - staff, myself, management and family. I'm here to serve 'The Company', money isn't the only motivation, I see this as shallow."
- **Hired gun/ hired hand** – P1 is in the Baby Boomer generational group and is a task leader. Participant1 desires to be happy and enjoy work. This participant sets work goals each day. Participant 1 desires promotion but would not initiate training or learning. Participant 1 is prepared to work across any department in 'The Company' even if this means different physical locations. P1: "(I want to) Learn more

skills, I keep asking to try different things; I put my hand up, offering to undertake that work.”

- Protean Career Architect – P12 is in the Millennial generational group and is a field worker. Participant 12 holds strong values and has a sense of obligation to ‘The Company’ and the community. Participant 12 believes that this job they currently have is a stepping stone in developing a career and so is prepared to undertake all the training opportunities that are offered. P12: “I like using my brain, being intellectually stimulated. Some managers think they have invested a lot into me and this had been positive for me. I turn things around and work hard and produce results. Then you are returning what they have given. Work harder - I need to.”

### **Goal setting**

Some participants set personal goals for their work; to be happy and enjoy their work (P1, task leader; P2, supervisor; and P8, manager), to have low stress (P2, supervisor), to be honest (P8, manager), to be a good worker (P1 and P10, task leaders), to be efficient (P7, task leader), and to learn from experiences gained (P3, manager).

The way that participants set goals for work varied from one participant to another ranging from day-to-day goals, to short term and long term goals. One manager set informal goals while two participants, one supervisor and one manager, set no work goals at all. There was some confusion for four participants who did not feel ownership of the goals ‘The Company’ set for them. They were either unsure what the goals were or even if they and ‘The Company’ had the same goals.

The fieldworker identified personal responsibility for their goals, but did not indicate what types of goals were set. Task leaders mostly set day-to-day goals, which would make sense, as each day they are given work to do by their supervisor or manager and also find out who will be working with them.

Usually this type of information is imparted on a daily basis with the task leader's input. The three supervisors and two managers all had different goal setting methods with supervisors having short term, day-to-day and no goals. Managers had informal goals or no goals.

The generational breakdown of the groups showed that when setting short term goals there was one Baby Boomer who identified with this type of goal setting. Day-to-day goals were undertaken by four Baby Boomers and informal goals by one Baby Boomer. One Generation X and one Baby Boomer did not set any work goals.

Task Leaders (3), supervisor (1), and managers (3), were committed to their jobs with 'The Company' for medium – long term. Six of these participants were Baby Boomers with one Millennial. One participant from the work streams of fieldworker, task leader and managers said they planned to be with 'The Company' no more than three years and saw their future with 'The Company' short term. They were one Generation X and two Millennials. Three participants who indicated that outside influences would affect their decision about the length of time they stayed with 'The Company' were one task leader and two supervisors, all were Baby Boomers.

### **Training and Goal Setting**

It is usually 'The Company' who creates, initiates, and offers training opportunities to employees. Participant 6 (task leader) said they had no idea what type of training options were accessible to them and would like 'The

Company' to communicate availability . They also expressed lack of faith in approaching 'The Company' with ideas for training. It was communicated this way, P6: "I haven't approached 'The Company' 'cause I think there is no point. In the past I have been promised stuff. It hasn't happened, e.g. XXX. There is no encouragement from management."

Participant 5 (supervisor) who has worked with 'The Company' for more than five years, had a different story. This participant said they had had a range of training over the years. "I have a whole box full of training stuff." All the training that they had was initiated by management and not by P5.

On-the-job training was usually the responsibility of task leaders and supervisors with managers allocating tasks as they identified the need. It is therefore the goals of 'The Company', which to degree are client driven, that influenced training that has been offered. Participant 11 (manager): "There is a limited ability to offer staff training. It (training) has been based on needs of 'The Company' as opposed to personal staff needs. Direct impact on business is a consideration. We ('The Company') have to adapt to the times." The one fieldworker in this project was grateful for their job and the learning opportunities offered.

Opportunities for participants to establish personal development of their careers were limited because they didn't know what or if any training options were available for them. While most participants (especially the fieldworker and task leaders) had aspirations for promotion and/or career development, it



was 'The Company' and not the participant themselves who usually created opportunities for professional development.

### **Summary**

Participants discussed three principal categories or themes during this research project. They were workplace values, workplace training and workplace goals. This complements the enquiry of the researcher as stated in the research questions.

Participant's values have been carefully reviewed and categorised according to the strands identified by Ros et al. (1999) and they are summarised in the following section.

### **Workplace values**

#### ***Extrinsic workplace values***

Lifestyle and work balance, money, promotion, rewards and financial security and stability are all examples of extrinsic reward that have been identified by the participants in this project. Extrinsic values resonated with one participant, P7 who described them in the following way: "It (my job) feels good it gives me security in unsecure times. The more you do for 'The Company' the more they do for you." Extrinsic values were relevant for some participants, namely P6, P7 and P10 (task leaders) and P5 and P2 (supervisors), the other participants identified more closely with intrinsic values.

### ***Intrinsic workplace values***

One quarter of participants identified happiness and enjoyment as attributes they valued in the workplace but variation of tasks was the most valued viewpoint held by three quarters of participants about workplace jobs and responsibilities. This attribute was equally valued by participants who primarily worked in an office as it was by those who had very physically demanding roles with 'The Company'. Similarly those with decision making roles and managerial responsibilities valued this attribute highly. Its value was equally recognised across generational groupings with Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials acknowledging its value. It could be argued that variation of tasks contribute to happiness and enjoyment in the workplace as well as success which was also identified as a valuable attribute by the fieldworker, task leaders and managers.

Managers are responsible for setting daily jobs that need to be undertaken. All three managers who participated in this project recognised the value of variation of tasks and it would seem likely that this would be a consideration when allocating tasks to "the crew". This is an example where the importance of dialogical relationships becomes apparent (Brockman and Dirx, 2006).

### ***Social workplace values***

Participants did not solely rely on their co-workers or other people to attain values attributions. Instead they were more inclined to rely on

themselves, 'The Company' or a combination of both. An example of this was expressed by P4: "...they ('The Company') probably hold values higher than I do. I feel they always aim for a high standard for the betterment of 'The Company'. It makes you want to reach up and try to help them reach and achieve their goal."

The importance of team work and working relationships with co-workers and colleagues was also identified as valuable in the workplace.

### ***Prestige workplace values***

Prestige values can be attributed to self or to others in the workplace and they can have both positive and negative connotations. In the positive sense they can build up an employee's esteem and ability to influence the workplace but negatively when overshadowed by the power of others they can inhibit the growth of an individual in the workplace. A positive example of this value's strand is shared by P3 (manager) "I get to bring in more work so there is growth." Employees, 'The Company' and clientele would benefit from the prestige that this participant held. On a more negative aspect P12 (fieldworker), had this to say; "In the early stages when things stopped (due to the perceived economic down turn), I knew I wasn't going anywhere fast. I feel I have been held a little bit back. I don't hold this against anyone."

According to Henderson and Thompson (2003) "Values are the invisible threads of an organisation's culture as they connect people, performance and

profit. The key to creating such a culture is to link the various logical levels of the organisation to and through the values,” (p. 92).

Workplace training and the way that the participants value and perceive it has been discussed during this project by participants. It will be summarised in the next section.

## **Workplace Training**

### ***Hands-on training***

Hands-on training was identified by participants as the most effective way that they thought they learned in the workplace. Participant 5 said, “More practical based training, get it (training) out of the classroom and bring it into the field – after all we are a field based company. A lot of training can become quite tedious and it is easy to lose interest and become disheartened. There are awesome benefits too; it would be enjoyable, interactive and gain respect from learners. Higher involvement is needed from staff. Learners are part of the training process.” There were also a group who thought that team work should be part of the training initiatives that were available for employees. One participant who felt strongly about building team work and practical training was P6. When asked what they would like to see happen with training Participant 6 had this to say, “I’d find something, like confidence courses, and team building. I’d go deeper than the current team building which only scratches the surface. Employees know each other, but they don’t know each

other. This would improve ‘The Company’ as relationships with people would improve as would work ethic.”

### **Experiential Learning**

The ideas that participants have identified endorse those of Chisholm et al.(1994) regarding workplace training and their argument of considering several methodological factors. Experiential learning theories were identified by Chisholm et al. as important considerations that need to be made when workplace training was undertaken. Participants in this project identified this by employing some experiential modes of learning. As an example Dewey’s model of experiential learning (Chisholm et al., p. 326) identifies the cycle of (a) concrete experience/s, (b) reflection, (c) abstract conceptualisation and (d) application. A practical example of this is the task leader training that ‘The Company’ has developed to fulfil an identified training need. Four participants acknowledged this as good training (P 1 and P7, task leaders; P5, supervisor and P11, manager).

### **Generational groups**

There were some areas where all participants thought similarly about workplace training, for example the value of having variety in the workplace or acknowledging the importance of workplace training. In other areas generational groupings influenced results, for example two Millennials identified that repetition of a task led to boredom which no other group identified as significant. The one Generation X participant was one of only two

participants who did not goal set for work. The eight Baby Boomers in this project held a variety of opinions and there was not any outstanding feature that identified their generational grouping, they were often similar with their thinking to Generation X or Millennials and it seemed that other factors influenced them.

### **Education**

Educational levels and qualifications varied among the participants ranging from less than three years secondary education to post graduate qualifications. Opinions and values about training and the development of career pathways have been influenced by education levels attained. Those with higher education levels were more likely to have higher aspirations and the ability to goal set for achievement.

### **Positions in ‘The Company’**

Positions held in the workplace showed some distinct differences. The fieldworker did not express strong affiliation with workplace values however, there was a sense of obligation and gratitude to ‘The Company’. This participant was strongly focused on work and career goals and acknowledged the role of training to assist in attainment of those goals. Task leaders, as a group, also held a sense of obligation to ‘The Company’ and most believed that to get ahead in their careers training was necessary. They were visionary regarding their positions within the workplace and all desired promotion. They were also the group that expressed frustration with and uncertainty about their

value to 'The Company'. Supervisors, as a group, were inclined to feel positively about their role. They expressed few disappointments and acknowledged they felt secure both socially and financially. At the same time two of the three supervisors involved with this project desired promotion however they did not want to be more challenged than they already felt they currently were. Managers unanimously showed they valued a lifestyle and work balance. They desired to improve their skill levels and thought they would be prepared to undertake training in their own time to make this happen. No managers voiced frustration or disappointment in 'The Company' or identified needing security as values they sought through their workplace.

## **Workplace goals**

### **Workplace goal setting**

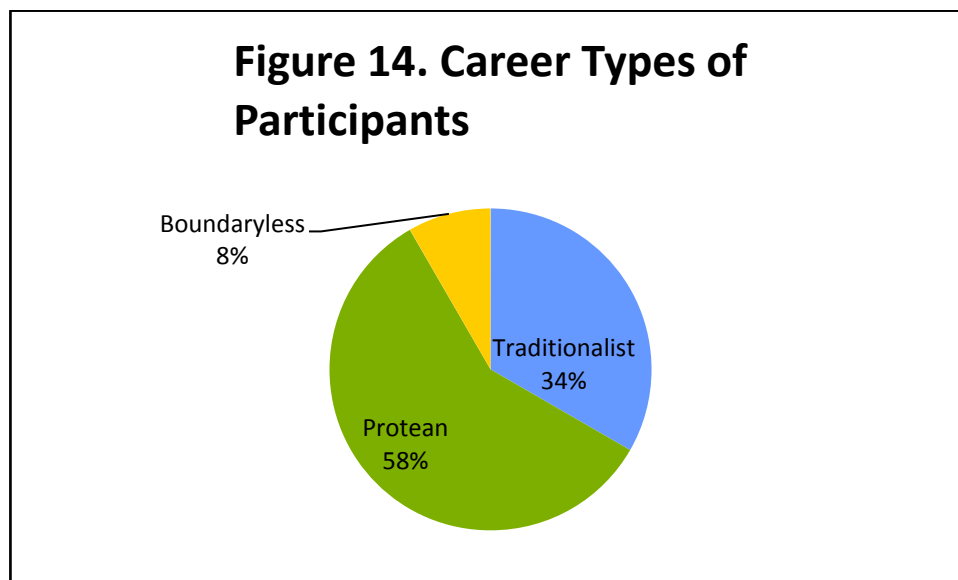
Most participants (7) in this project desired to be promoted within 'The Company'. The way that they hoped to achieve this goal varied widely among the participatory group. Some of the goals setting techniques adopted were day-to-day goals, visualising goals, short term goals, informal goals and long term goals. Two participants stated that they did not set any work related goals. Participant 8 had this to say about the way they goal set: "I have informal goals ... I get disappointed with myself if I don't meet my personal standard. My strategy is I self-monitor. Feedback becomes my tool to monitor accuracy."

Some participants did not think their goals and 'The Company's' were aligned, while others were unsure how to make their goals a reality. All

participants stated that they believed that setting and achieving goals was their personal responsibility and not 'The Company's'. When discussing goal setting responsibility P5 said, "It is mine and mine alone."

### **Career Development**

All three recognised career types, traditionalist, protean and boundaryless (Clarke, 2008; Briscoe and Hall, 2006) were represented by participants in this project. Figure 14 shows the breakdown of the three recognised career types that participants in this project exhibited.



### **Traditionalist**

It has been said that the traditionalist career is outdated and becoming obsolete, belonging to the last century (Clarke, 2008). Four participants or one third of the participants, in this project, related best to the traditional career model. Three of them were Baby Boomers (two task leaders; and one supervisor). Of the three none had received any tertiary education but one had



completed four years of secondary education. The fourth participant was a Millennial (task leader). This participant had a Polytechnic qualification but was not using this qualification and did not consider it useful in the job that they did. The four traditionalists expected that 'The Company' would recognise, acknowledge and reward them for their loyalty, hard work and work ethic. They fully trusted 'The Company' with their well-being and believed that they would be trained by 'The Company' in areas where it saw fit. They were unlikely to personally seek promotion, although they all desired it and expected 'The Company' to provide it. They would be reluctant or unwilling to relocate or move departments, preferring to work in a linear fashion within their current environmental situation.

### **Protean**

Most participants (7) resonated with the protean career model. These participants are driven by their own goals as opposed to the organisation that they work for. They are also more inclined to desire psychological success (enjoyment, happiness and relationships with co-workers) rather than what is known as objective success (pay, rank and power) (Briscoe and Hall, 2006). These participants know where they are heading and endeavour to seek and make opportunities work to their personal advantage. Of the seven protean participants all generational groupings were represented, those with tertiary qualifications and those without and all streams of 'The Company's' workforce; fieldworkers, task leaders, supervisors and managers. Protean employees maintain a sense of loyalty to the organisation they work for and this was true

for participants in this project. Participants from this career model were more inclined to seek and value communication opportunities with their managers, expect their careers to complement their preferred lifestyles and were prepared to seek out, initiate and/or undertake training opportunities, often in their own time.

### **Boundaryless**

There was only one participant for which the boundaryless career model was applicable. This participant was a Baby Boomer who worked as a task leader. The boundaryless career employee is not bound by a work stream or a geographical location. They will move across departments, organisations and, or locations if they believe it will advance their career. They said to be opportunity seekers.

The next chapter will discuss the impact of the participant's identified attitudes and values and what, if any, influence they may have had on career development.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Discussion**

#### **Introduction**

Three research questions were developed to explore the perceptions of 12 participants employed at 'The Company' to ascertain whether or not their workplace attitudes and values had an influence on their career development. In this chapter the three questions will be considered as the wider objective of participants' attitudes and values in the workplace are discussed. The three research questions will be discussed in the order they are presented in the following bullet pointed list.

- Do participants' workplace values contribute to their engagement with on-the-job training and their self-management and development of their careers?
- Have the participants' perceived any differences in training opportunities, over time in their current employment? To what do they attribute these changes?
- From the perspective of the participants', whose goals influence and drive engagement in on-the-job training, career development and management of employees?

#### **Work place Values**

The workplace values that were identified by participants in this project showed a composition of intrinsic, extrinsic, social and prestige values (Ros et al. 1999). Distinguishing which types of values were most highly regarded by

participants was not straight forward as there appeared to be a range of combinations of values with each of the participants. Some values complemented one another while others seemed contradictory. This observation is supported by Ros et al. who claim that values can be “conflicting and compatible” (p. 51). Ros et al. give an example in their research showing that a person who exhibits and believes in kind-hearted values may experience conflict if they have a desire to achieve in their work situation. This is because the kindness to others value may need to be pushed aside or compromised in order to achieve prestige at work. In this project a similar scenario became apparent when P10 (task leader) was being interviewed. This participant expressed surprise in the changes to some co-workers’ behaviour/s as employment and training opportunities changed. Participant 10 believed that they stopped thinking and working as a team and were more concerned with “looking after number one”. This was perceived as detrimental to the core values that Participant 10 held.

Hauff and Kirchner (2014) note in their study that work values held by employees may have a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic values. Examples they use include job security, high income and opportunities for promotion as extrinsic values and an interesting job and opportunities for working independently as intrinsic values (p. 34). This finding corresponds with participants in this study who identified more than one type of work value as important to them. In the following sections each value will be discussed separately however, it is a reasonable deduction to presume that each participant has facets of each work value as part of their personal work values.

### *Intrinsic values*

The desire to be creative in the workplace, wanting autonomy and being interested in your work are known as intrinsic work values (Ros et al. 1999). These authors found that interesting and meaningful work, opportunity for growth and being able to use cognitive skills were all intrinsic values that were identified in their research. Two participants in this project identified that they did not like repetition in their work as this led to boredom. Two more participants stated that they needed to be stimulated in their work. These responses indicate that four participants in this research project valued being able to use cognitive skills in their work environment. Autonomy in the workplace was identified as a value by participants and it was expressed in several ways; being stimulated, wanting to feel more challenged, experiencing success and being able to work flexible hours. Independent thinking and the ability to make core decisions regarding personal career development were also valued by participants in this project as a level of autonomy in the workplace.

The types of values indicated as valuable by participants are also recognised by Hall (2004) as attributes of the contemporary career types known as protean and boundaryless careers. Hall believes that the protean career model is influenced by the employee's core values, most notably those areas that are seeking psychological benefits. Psychological benefits can be described as the cognitive or intellectual benefits that humans desire in life. They are the intrinsic and prestige values that Ros et al. (1999) discuss. Participants

identified such values as using initiative, experiencing success and being happy which typically fitted into this category of career profile.

### *Extrinsic values*

Short and Harris (2010) found that extrinsic values were the most important values identified by employees in their study. Extrinsic values recognise the role of such attributes as job security, income, and maintaining an order in one's life (Ros et al. 1999). While participants in this project did not appear to hold extrinsic values as highly as intrinsic, social or prestige values they were still considered important.

Neither the field worker nor any of the three managers' ranked money or security from their job as a value they held. In the case of the fieldworker this could be because of their relative inexperience in the workforce. This participant stated in their interview that experience, both practical and professional, was a personal goal. Managers have prestige and influence in 'The Company's' structure and it could be argued that these values within an organisation lead to security and the attainability of extrinsic values. Managers did however recognise having a work and life style balance as an important value. Task leaders and supervisors did identify with the extrinsic values. They wanted employment security and fair remuneration for work undertaken.

Henderson and Thompson (2003) reveal that the organisation that cares about the personal satisfaction of their employee will be able to engage employees who will readily work for them as an organisation. These will be

employees whose values are similar or in alignment with their own. In this study there were five participants who were not sure if 'The Company' values were the same or similar to their own. This uncertainty was solely expressed by one work stream, the task leaders. Participants across all work streams also identified uncertainty in the economic climate. They expressed concern that factors such as belt tightening by 'The Company', lost training opportunities and pressure from clients could alter their employment situations.

### *Social values*

Gardner (2008) believes that in the modern world where information is processed by computers there are less personable interactions. He claims it is important to recognise and grow the five types of thinking, which he terms five minds. Gardner is of the opinion that the five minds impact on attitudes and values in the workplace through the broad uses of the mind that he identifies as; discipline, synthesizing, creating, respectful and ethical. They are evident in some of the identified values that the participants in this project have considered most valuable. An example of this was revealed by Participant 8 (manager) who identified interacting with other people as a value in the workplace that was important to them. According to Gardner this is using the "respectful mind" (p. 157). An individual with a respectful mind in the workplace is identified as someone who has the ability to work well with colleagues and employers irrespective of their similarities or differences. They are the employees who have sympathetic and tolerant natures and are able to show a capacity for forgiveness (in other words, they are not inclined to hold a grudge). Supporting

Gardner's importance of the value of respect are the social values identified by Ros et al. (1999). They describe the nature of "benevolence" as one that is "forgiving, respectful, helpful, honest and loyal" (p. 4).

### ***Prestige values***

Values that lead to achievement in the workplace are prestige values. They can be described as those which contribute to power, authority and influence in the workplace. Short (2008) found in his research that distribution of power can lead to an imbalance in the workplace between workers and workers, workers and managers, workers and organisations and managers and organisations. In this project all participants desired some form of prestige values such as remuneration, being a good worker, influencing decision making or wanting promotion. Ros et al (1999) identify being proud of the company you work for, being influential in the workplace and "advancement" as examples of prestige values (p. 56).

Participants believed that prestige in the workplace was a value that they all wanted to attain in one form or another. All three managers and one supervisor identified that the positions that they held in the workplace developed into a sense of job satisfaction. Desiring responsibility was another type of prestige value that participants identified. There were not any participants who stated that they desired power however, two managers did indicate that power and influence were important in decision making areas for them. This was both on a daily basis in the workplace and also as a wider organisational basis for 'The Company'.



The way that values impact on training in the workplace varies from individual to individual, there are however some common threads that influence direction and commitment of participants to engagement with on-the-job training, self management and career development. In this project they have been identified as education, generational groupings, career types and work streams.

### **Engagement with work values**

Irrespective of educational levels or qualifications achieved all participants agreed that workplace training was important to them. This may or may not have been on-the-job (hands-on) training, although five of the participants did agree that they preferred this training method. No pattern has emerged that would suggest that participants with tertiary qualifications valued training any more or less than participants without. This could be attributed to the type of work that is undertaken at 'The Company', mostly hands-on, physical and practical.

Although educational levels and qualification achieved were not part of Brockman and Dirkx's (2006) study about machine operators those that they interviewed were practical workers. The workers they interviewed identified the following as on-the-job reinforcers when learning new skills; being able to problem-solve in the workplace (both independently and with colleagues), dialogical relationships with co-workers, management and in social contexts and having paper work that helps absorb the required information. Supporting this theory Schmidt (2007) found in his research about training and job

satisfaction that face-to-face interactions was the preferred training methodology with the participants in his study. There is no evidence in this research project that participants valued any form of paper work that they received as part of training initiatives, in fact the opposite was expressed with participants expressing distaste with most forms of formal learning. They did however value dialogical conversations with co-workers, managers and in some cases in social contexts as well as value opportunities to use their initiative in the workplace.

Early school leavers and those without formal qualifications are often described as the low-skilled workforce (Illeris, 2006). This does not appear to be the case at 'The Company' where two of the participants without any formal qualifications have risen up through the ranks to achieve high status positions of supervisor and manager. In other words practical skills relevant to the type of work undertaken by 'The Company' has been recognised, valued and rewarded by management.

Levels of education influenced two of the identified values that assisted with participant's ability to self-manage their careers. Participants with higher levels of education (tertiary qualifications) identified aiming to achieve job satisfaction and recognising lost training opportunities as values they either self-managed towards or conceded they had missed out on. These values were not identified by any of the participants who did not have tertiary qualifications. Interestingly, when asked to consider if they would be prepared to continue learning to develop their careers all participants with tertiary qualifications were

noncommittal. An exception to this was one field worker with a university degree. This participant did not identify that 'The Company' would offer training in the necessary skills desired that might advance their career and instead thought that independent sourcing of their own training might be required and then having to undertake it from their own initiative.

All generational groupings represented in this project; Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980) and Millennials (1981-2000) endorsed the value of workplace training. This does not necessarily mean however that each group learns best from the same strategy. Lancaster and Stillman (2005) suggest that regardless of the generational mix of a training group the importance of recognising learning styles of participants is necessary for successful outcomes. This concept is also endorsed by Chisholm et al. (2009) who state that experiential learning in the workplace is an accepted and successful way of approaching training in the workplace. 'The Company' has attempted to address this by constructing a training programme for task leaders that they believe will increase skills levels, give knowledge and create a working partnership with this group of employees. The fact that four participants considered this training as valuable endorses 'The Company's' objectives. One of the participants who recognised the value of task leader training, P1 (task leader), also expressed frustration with some of the limitations of the training. This participant thought that there needed to be further follow up to the training at regular intervals to support and add value to the task leader role and also to feel support from 'The Company' in the work they were doing.

The way each generational group engages and identifies with training may not have been the same, but outcomes were similar namely, learning new skills, job satisfaction and career development

When discussing self-management and the development of career paths from the perspective of generational groupings Lancaster and Stillman (2005) use an analogy of a Rubik's cube. They remark that careers are similar to the three-dimensional game because they "move up, down or sideways, depending on strategy and fit" (p. 61). In this project all three representative generational groups identified with this picture and there was no special feature that identified one group over another. Uncertainties however were the sole feature of Baby Boomers, who although desiring job satisfaction were uncertain how to make that goal a reality.

Regardless of which career type traditional, protean or boundaryless all participants supported the importance of workplace training as a value. Most participants considered that training would maintain or increase their employability. Clarke (2008) gives insight into the term employability. She suggests that the ideal model for employability is a joint vision between employer and employee but in today's workplace the responsibility of maintaining employment has increasingly fallen to the employee. This was also the perception of participants in this project, who unanimously thought that they and they alone were responsible for ensuring their goals and vision regarding their work became a reality. Two participants who identified that the values they believed that 'The Company' held about them and their roles affected the

way they felt towards ‘The Company’. There were similar values between protean and traditional career models.

Each work stream represented in this project has acknowledged the importance and value of workplace training. Two of the participants who had positions that required specialised skills from them (a supervisor and a manager) valued the one-to-one training that they had received. This was not necessarily relevant for all the work streams. The fieldworker did not hold any strong values about on-the-job training, although conceded that they thought training was structured more for the top tiers of the workforce and thought there should be more consideration for lower tiered workers. According to Chow et al. (2014) young employees have been known to have high or unrealistic expectations about the workplace and job entitlement, believing they are entitled to more than what they receive. This is not inferring that the fieldworker in this project had unrealistic expectations about their position in ‘The Company’ but this individual was the only participant to make this particular observation about workplace training.

Unsurprisingly managers were the most confident and self-managing group in the work streams employed at ‘The Company’. This would seem to be because they have their skills recognised, have reached the highest place on the hierarchical ladder, and have the ability to fit lifestyle choices into their workplace ethos. Task leaders and fieldworkers, who mostly desire promotion and are making their way, (they hope) up ‘The Company’s’ ladder still feel a need to prove their worthiness and work ethic so they can be noticed by

management as suitable for elevation. This behaviour demonstrated by task leaders and field workers is acknowledged by Clarke (2008). Clarke suggests that the employees who desire and are working for employability are increasingly taking personal responsibility for career moves.

### **Summary of workplace values**

Short and Harris (2010) identified career progression as the most highly rated of employee values in their New Zealand study. Similarly, in this project almost all participants (excluding managers) expressed the desire for promotion within 'The Company'. The acquisition of new skills, according to participants, leads to useful experiences that they hoped 'The Company' would recognise and reward them for accordingly. This finding is supported by Schmidt (2007) who discerned that the way an employee feels about training, the ways it is offered and/or received from the workplace can and does influence attitudes at work and impact on career decisions.

The values that participants had regarding their ability to self-manage in the workplace in relation to workplace training were mostly intrinsic and social. The ability to self-manage can be directly associated with the desire to remain in employment or to gain new skills that could lead to career progression and employability (Clarke 2008). In this project some of the participant's disappointments, uncertainties and fears gave an insight to the attributes they valued regarding the ways they self-managed their careers such as lost training and learning opportunities, not getting the training they hoped for and uncertainty about what types of training might be available for them.

Participants' views of training opportunities will be discussed in the next section.

### **Workplace training opportunities**

The modern day career is influenced by many different characteristics such as an aging workforce, the impact of technology, globalization and mobility of workers (Zhao & Kemp, 2012; Short & Harris, 2010; Lo Presti, 2009; Short, 2008,). At 'The Company' participants identified the "current economic climate" as the one factor that had significant impact on their opportunities for workplace training and career development. They perceived that there were less training opportunities than there had been in the past. This, participants believed, sometimes led to low morale and confidence in the workplace and lack of follow-up by managers or supervisors. While conceding that with such constraints "belt-tightening" was to be expected participants were still disappointed that they were unable to access some of the opportunities that might have been available for them in different circumstances. It was mentioned by three participants that in the current economic climate they believed that workers were less inclined to consider training options and availability, but rather were grateful to have a job and just wanted to get on with the job at hand without any complications.

One of the managers believed that 'The Company's' needs rather than that of its employees became the driver for training when economic strains were apparent. This manager also thought the cost to 'The Company' was taken into account when workplace training was being considered by those with the

authority to approve or disapprove training for employees. The costs that it was believed that 'The Company' considered were financial costs and lost production by having staff undertake training programmes. Short (2008) suggests that leaders in workplaces should equip their employees to manage times of change by suggesting strategies to help them cope with change, prevent "strategic drift and ensure long-term success" (p.38).

The perceived changes in training opportunities were identified by all generational groupings and were not influenced by educational levels or tertiary qualifications. The only field worker in this study did not resonate with any of the perceived changes in the workplace; but all other work streams were represented task leaders, supervisors and managers.

### **Summary of workplace training**

Participants believed that there had been changes to the way that training opportunities were offered at 'The Company'. They attribute these changes to what they have termed the current economic climate. In the environment where participants in this study primarily work, there had been redundancies, restructuring and changes in workforce expectations for a large proportion of 'The Company's' client base. This led to some structural changes at 'The Company' and the workforce had been impacted. It is therefore unsurprising that participants in this project would recognise the economy as a major cause for change in training and training opportunities.



Changes were identified regardless of educational levels or tertiary qualifications, across all generational groupings and career types and three work streams, task leaders, manager and supervisors.

To help gain understanding about the changes that participants believe have occurred at 'The Company', the ownership of goals that influence participant's engagement in on-the-job training, career development and management of employees have been explored. They will be discussed in the following section.

### **Workplace goals**

All participants (except for managers) expressed a desire for promotion within 'The Company'. The ways that they acknowledged this goal and worked towards it were diverse and at times heterogeneous while at other times similar in nature. Locke and Latham (1984) believe that goal setting can be used by anyone who desires to improve performance and/or productivity as an individual or as an organisation. Locke and Latham explain that goal setting is not simply a matter left to illusive imagery but rather a skill that requires techniques so that the desired goal can be reached and maintained. Taking Locke and Latham's explanation into account and acknowledging the aspirations of participants regarding promotion and the fact that all participants believed they were responsible for their goals to become a reality, it is a surprising observation that there does not appear to be any method applied to goal setting strategies.

Some participants engage in training believing that even if they have no formal qualifications workplace training can be a pathway leading to career development and future promotion within ‘The Company’. This was clearly expressed by Participant 1 who had no formal qualifications. It was their individual goal to work up to the position of field supervisor. To achieve this Participant 1 stated that they were willing to undertake any training offered by ‘The Company’, were prepared to be boundaryless in both physical and psychological senses and would willingly work hard to achieve the goals they had set themselves. However, this same participant (P1) also specified that they were not prepared to undertake training in their own time, and had no definite opinions about where their trust lay regarding successful outcomes. These appear to be conflicting ideas. The uncertainty about how to make goals a reality and concerns that ‘The Company’ likely holds differing values than the participant does were identified by participants as areas of concern.

Educational levels and tertiary qualifications did not appear to influence the ways participant’s goals were set, valued or managed. Baby Boomers as a group expressed uncertainty of the ways to make their goals a reality while it was a group of task leaders that believed ‘The Company’s’ workplace goals for them were different to the goals that they had for themselves.

### **Summary of workplace goals**

The desire for promotion within ‘The Company’ was a goal that was seen to be achievable by the fieldworker, task leaders and some supervisors. Goal setting for reaching promotion was virtually non-existent in the

participatory group and participants did not acknowledge any leadership from 'The Company' to help them achieve those goals.

Most participants set some type of work goals but they were not uniformed or formalised in any way. There did not appear to be any expectation from management about goal setting and outcomes.

The conclusions made from this research project will be covered in the next chapter.

### **Limitations**

A case study of the type that was undertaken in this research can only give the perceptions of participants involved. Therefore the opinions of 'The Company', (which were not sought), have not been included in this analysis of the research questions.

This project had only a small sample of participants from one company. There were other workers who, it is more than likely, may hold different thoughts and opinions regarding the topics covered and this could alter the way interpretations were articulated and recorded. In this regard, this study cannot be generalized to other workers in 'The Company' nor other organisations and workers.

There were three categories within the participatory group that only had one person in each; fieldworker, Generation X and boundaryless career type. This made comparisons within the groups difficult and unrealistic. This meant there was times when the data gathered from these groups, while significant as

individual pieces of information they were not as useful when discussing that particular group.

Being an inside researcher (Mutch, 2005) posed some psychological limitations such as, role conflicts (being a researcher and a worker at 'The Company'), trying to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, possible lack of objectivity associated with insider knowledge and the feeling of being judged by your colleagues (Mutch, pp. 85-86). The researcher was aware of time restraints, pressures and commitments of both her co-workers and also 'The Company'. There were times when work was required to be undertaken by the researcher and these sometimes became lost opportunities with participants. Further time with participants may have been beneficial for this project but the researcher was reluctant to impact on work or leisure time of the participants any more than was necessary, understanding and respecting the type of work they did on a daily basis.

### **Recommendations for future research**

This project considered the thoughts, opinions and feeling of employees at 'The Company'. This is only one perspective of what occurs in this particular workplace which involved 30 % of the total workforce. It would be pertinent to consider the perspectives of company management, human resource personnel, managers and other leadership roles in this company and also in other companies.

Values that participants identified were as varied and different as the participants themselves. Education, generational groupings, career profiles and work streams all had influences on the values that each participant held. This suggests that some values were already formed before employment with 'The Company' began. It would be of interest to explore in greater depth the ways identified areas of education, generational groupings, career profiles and work streams influence the values that participants held in any way. Further to that suggestion, it is likely that there are other attributes of influence that have not been addressed in this project.

Goal setting was identified as the sole responsibility of participants yet there were no common strategies or methodologies employed at personal or organisational levels. All participants had goals that they hoped to attain and achieve, some short-term and others long-term. These reflected day-to-day operations of the workplace, employability, career aspirations and more personal desires. Therefore it would be valuable to understand: How might specific goal setting strategies be utilized by management and employees to enhance employees goal seeking?

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion**

Firstly in this chapter the attributes of education, generational groupings, career profiles and work streams will be re-visited. After that each of the research questions will be reflected on in turn, giving consideration to the results and drawing upon any conclusions that have emerged

### **Education**

Six of the 12 participants had achieved post secondary qualifications at polytechnics, private institutions or universities. Most of the participants with university and private institute qualifications held high status positions in 'The Company', with the exception of the fieldworker who was a university graduate. Only one participant with a higher educational level stated they were in their 'ideal' job with the others working in unrelated areas than those they had qualified in. Saying this, the majority conceded that their qualifications were valuable especially in areas such as; problem-solving, academic writing, communication and discipline. In regard to developing their careers; some participants in this group were open to change and had definite directions where they were heading while others believed they had reached their destination and had no aspirations for future career development.

Participants who did not have post secondary qualifications were mostly task leaders and supervisors, with the exception of one manager. Most of this group aspired for progress up 'The Company's' ladder. Some of them did not

believe the education that they had was of any benefit to them in the workplace and were more inclined to appreciate experiential on-the-job learning that they considered relevant to them on a daily basis. Most of the participants hoped that 'The Company' would recognise their skills, hard work and work ethic and reward them accordingly.

### **Generational groupings**

Age differences and the peculiarities of each generational group have been identified as a challenge for any employer and for co-workers who are required work together (Short 2008; Lancaster & Stillman 2005). Participants in this project identified with three generational groups; Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials.

Considering career development all groups were represented among those wanting to increase their career prospects with 'The Company'. The values that they held about the way this would occur or the attributes that would influence it were different. Baby Boomers tended to value intrinsically; to be happy and enjoy their work, low stress, be honest and efficient. It was also Baby Boomers who held the highest desire for extrinsic and prestige rewards; remuneration, promotion and having a lifestyle and work balance (extrinsic) and independence and flexibility (prestige). This is consistent with the finds previously mentioned (Hauff and Kirchner, 2014; Ros et al. 1999) about combined and sometimes conflicting work values. Generation X valued social attributes most highly; having a say and making a difference, communication and team work. It was also this group that identified prestige values especially

being able to have a say and make a difference. The Millennials group identified with three values groups; intrinsic, extrinsic and social. Some of the ways they expressed this was; desiring to be a good worker and learn from experiences (intrinsic), promotion and remuneration (extrinsic) and information sharing and communication (social).

While the generational groupings work and think differently there are common attributes that are valued among all groups. Working together this valuable mix of participants held all the ingredients that could contribute positively to individual career development and also to 'The Company' as they co-worked together on tasks. This is what Henderson and Thompson (2003) identified as aligned work place values.

### **Career types**

Three career types have been identified and discussed during this case study; traditional, protean and boundaryless (Clarke, 2008; Briscoe & Hall, 2005). The most surprising result was the number of participants (four) who shared most attributes with the traditional career model. This is not consistent with recent research that indicates this is a dying model (Clarke 2008). The career model that most participants (seven) resonated with however was the protean model. This model indicates that individuals are prepared to take ownership and responsibility for their own career and not rely on the more traditional aspects of employer decisions. The protean employee will consider a number of career options over a life cycle of working and may move up, down and across departments as well as companies and geographical locations. In



other words they are willing to change the direction of their career to suit the circumstances or opportunities that come their way. There was one boundaryless career profile represented in this project. This person expressed a willingness to move geographically for work and had undertaken tasks across most work streams. The significant differences between the protean employees and the boundaryless employee were the desire for power and prestige in the workplace and the willingness to move physically for work or career opportunities.

### **Work streams**

There were four work streams represented in this project; fieldworker, task leader, supervisor and manager. The only group that no aspirations for promotion were managers however this did not necessarily mean they had no desire for career development.

The fieldworker was prepared to undertake all the training opportunities offered to them, grasping every opportunity to increase personal skills and knowledge bases. Task leaders had similar notions as the fieldworker in this respect. Supervisors and managers were both in the top tier of work streams and were less inclined to be generalised about their training aspirations, rather more focused on specific outcomes.

All work streams aspired to develop their career in some way. Participants did not demonstrate they had the skills or knowledge to set suitable goals to help them achieve their desired outcomes. Goal setting was seen

unanimously by the participants as their personal responsibility but there were times when disappointment was expressed towards management or 'The Company' when these goals seemed far away or unobtainable.

*Do participants' workplace values contribute to their engagement with on-the-job training and their self-management and development of their careers?*

The four workplace values that were identified by Ros et al. (1999) were used as tools to assist with identifying values that participants had in the workplace. They were intrinsic, extrinsic, social, and prestige values (Ros et al.). These values sometimes stood alone as influences in specific areas of work but when considering complex concepts such as on-the-job training, self-management and career development, participants were inclined to show combinations of work values. There were times when the values contradicted one another and times when they were complementary. This is supported by other researchers such as Hauff and Kirchner (2014) and Ros et al. (1999).

Participants work values do contribute to engagement with on-the-job training, their self-management and the development of their careers. However, the level of contribution is subjective, open to interpretation and challenging to measure. Work values may contribute positively or negatively and this outcome hinges on the workplace values that are held by individual participants.

*Have the participants' perceived any differences in training opportunities, over time in their current employment? To what do they attribute these changes?*

Participants across all groupings identified a perceived decrease in training opportunities offered to them. It was thought that these changes had come about in more recent times (no actual time line was revealed). The changes were attributed to economic conditions in New Zealand and the world.

The perceived changes had influences in other ways for participants with two saying their confidence had been affected. Changes in the workplace also impacted on the way that participants regarded their employability. There were expressions of uncertainty about whether their skills and career progress would be advanced without the assistance of relevant training.

*From the perspective of the participants', whose goals influence and drive engagement in on-the-job training, career development and management of employees?*

Without exception all participants believed they were responsible for ensuring their work goals were met. The goals that were used in the workplace were primarily engaged by individual participants. Some ways these were accomplished were; visualising a task and then setting a goal to achieve it, informal goals, day-to-day goals and short-term goals. Two participants revealed that they did not set any work place goals.

There were also identified instances of a manager or supervisor allocating a task to be undertaken and sharing the work related goals with a task leader or a team of workers. These mostly occurred on a daily basis.

Training opportunities were generally offered by 'The Company' to participants. Three participants identified times when they had initiated a training suggestion and had it approved by 'The Company's' Board of Governors. One participant believed that if there was training "out there" that was a bet-fit for a particular employee and their situation, 'The Company' would view it favourably.

Modern career types of protean and boundaryless identify that employees are more inclined to take responsibility for developing their career pathway rather than leaving it to an organisation (Clarke, 2008; Briscoe & Hall, 2005). In this research eight participants fitted in these two models. However, four participants identified with the traditional model and this method is inclined to trust the guidance of an organisation for career development.

Staying in employment, defined as employability (Clarke, 2008) was increasingly becoming an important goal for employees to consider. While training, career pathways and self-management could in some ways influence management decisions about employment. Ultimately it was the decision of management, influenced in part by outside factors such as the economy, and the values, attitudes and work ethic of the employee that would decide whether or not employment would be retained.

## **Summary**

Attitudes and values are personal to each individual and are influenced by a variety of thoughts, feelings and actions. Examining the effects of participants' attitudes and values on career development has been the aim of this project. Three questions were used to gain information that would address

the primary aim of this project, which was to investigate: From Mountain Top to Coastal Wetlands: A case study of attitudes and values in the workplace and their influence on career development.

It would appear from the insights shared by the participants in this case study and through addressing the three research questions, attitudes and values do have an influence career development. How does this occur? This project has identified four influences; education, generational groupings, career types and work streams as relevant and important factors.

## Appendix A – Questionnaire



### Questionnaire:

#### From Mountain Top to Coastal Wetlands: A Case Study of Employees' Attitudes and Values about Workplace Training and the Influence of These on Career Development.

For each statement below, please select the number between 1 and 5 that is most appropriate to you.

- 1: Strongly Disagree                      2: Moderately Disagree  
 3: Neither agree nor disagree            4: Moderately Agree  
 5: Strongly Agree

- My current job is something I have always wanted to do
- Qualifications that I have previously gained (e.g. polytechnic / tertiary) are beneficial in my current position
- I have no need of external qualifications for my current position
- I believe that workplace training is important
- I value the times I can meet with my manager and discuss training opportunities that could be available to me and how I could achieve them
- I guess 'The Company' know what they want from me, they offer me training opportunities.
- There are things I want to learn that aren't available through my work.
- I have ideas about training but when I have mentioned them I don't feel like I'm listened to seriously.
- I like to receive as much training as I can, but I'm also looking at doing other things give me better chances e.g. taking a night course at Polytechnic.

1	2	3	4	5

- I've had some good training and have been well prepared for the tasks I undertake at work
- I am prepared to undertake learning that is related to my work in my **own** time
- If I'm to get ahead in my life, which includes my current job, I need to get all the training I can and I am prepared to also undertake some learning in my own time, if that's what it takes.
- I expect to be rewarded by 'The Company', either financially or by promotion, for all the training I undertake, which includes learning in my own time to improve my knowledge and skills.
- I'll do whatever training 'The Company' expects of me in their time, but I won't be spending any of my own time to train.
- I'm not all that bothered about training or up-skilling. I do my job and that's it. I leave work at work.
- I am a person who has a vision and I work hard to achieve it.
- I am someone who likes variety in their work. I endeavour to build up a variety of experiences that will be useful for the present and the future.
- I trust what 'The Company' suggests being useful work experiences and just get on with my job.
- I am someone who wants to get ahead in work and who is prepared to move about to make that happen (either into other departments, task areas or other locations).
- I am a person who doesn't really think about the future of my work and I don't plan ahead.

1	2	3	4	5

Please tick the appropriate box in relation to yourself:

Gender	M	F
Age	<20	21-29
	30-39	40-49
	50-59	>60
Ethnicity	NZ European	Māori
	Other (please name)	
Education	<3 years secondary	NCEA L1
	NCEA L2	NCEA L3
	School Certificate	University Entrance
	Poly Technic	University
Please name any qualifications you have:		

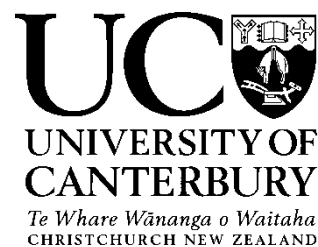
Sometimes when participating in a questionnaire like this you might start thinking in new directions. Please feel free to use the space below to comment in more detail about any ideas or thoughts that this questionnaire has brought up for you. You may wish to discuss them further in the interview and this would be a good reminder.

Thanks for your time, I'll be in touch soon about an interview time and place.

Lynne ☺



## Appendix B – Interview Questions



Research Project

**From Mountain Top to Coastal Wetlands: A Case Study of Employees' Attitudes and Values about Workplace Training and the Influence of These on Career Development.**

### Interview Questions

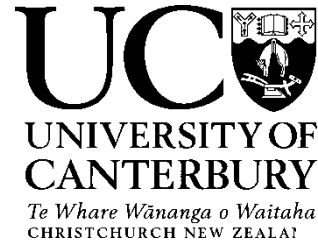
(Please note that these questions are a guide only; the actual questions will be based on responses by individual participants to the questionnaire. It is also important to allow participants to tell their own story, which may deviate from the interview format but never-the-less be important in reflecting individual's ideas and experiences, as they relate to the research question.)

1. I'd like you to tell me about your job.
  - What do you do each day?
2. How do you find that? For example; are there aspects of your work that you like/ dislike?
  - Are you happy / satisfied / fulfilled / unhappy / frustrated with your job?
  - What do you think the reasons for that is?
3. What qualifications did you bring to your current position?
  - Do you think they are useful / relevant in your day-to-day work?
  - Why do you think this, can you give me examples?
4. What do you personally value about your job?
  - How do you think this affects you as an employee?
  - Do you think that 'The Company' holds the same values that you do about your work?
  - How does this feel for you?
  - Does it affect your work in any way?
5. Has 'The Company' provided any specific training for you that have helped with your job?

- This could be hands-on training, going to a course, internet study etc...
6. Do you think that the training you have had is adequate for the tasks that are part of your work?
    - Why / why not?
    - Have you undertaken training on your own initiative?
    - Why did / did you not do this / consider this?
  7. Do you have goals that you have set for yourself regarding the work that you do?
    - What are they?
    - How do you hope to achieve them?
    - Whose responsibility do you think that it is for your goals to become a reality?
    - Do you think that the goal/s that you personally have are in line with those that 'The Company' has for you?
  8. How do you think about your future, as far as work is concerned?
    - Do you see yourself in this job in the long-term?
    - Do you have a plan for reaching the goals that you hope to achieve in your career?
    - How do you hope to make your goals a reality?
  9. How do you think changes in 'The Company', over recent times, have impacted on staff training?
    - Have these changes affected you personally? How?
    - How does this make you feel?
  10. If you were given the responsibility of organising on-the-job training at 'The Company' what would you do?
    - Would your ideas involve any changes to current practice?
    - Do you think management would be interested in your ideas?
    - What do you think the impact of your ideas would be?

The 'interview' is over, thank you so much for your time, ideas and honesty. Before we go has this discussion triggered anything that you'd like to add to the interview?

## Appendix C - Information Sheet



Lynne Maguire  
128 Karamea Highway  
RD1  
WESTPORT

P: 03 2808688  
M: 027 4757545  
E: [ima93@uclive.ac.nz](mailto:ima93@uclive.ac.nz)

Information Sheet regarding: Research Project of Lynne Maguire,  
student at University of Canterbury, College of Education.

The title of this research project is:

From Mountain Top to Coastal Wetlands: A Case Study of Attitudes and  
Values in the Workplace and Their Influence on Career Development.

What does that mean?

It means that Lynne is going to undertake research investigating some  
employees of 'The Company' to try and discover if their attitudes and  
values make a difference to how on-the-job training is viewed and  
undertaken. Lynne is also interested to see if/how employees plan their  
careers; how do attitudes and values contribute to this and what role  
does on-the-job training play in career paths?

What is 'The Company'?

'The Company' is a pseudonym that has been given to the place where  
we work, for the purpose of this study.

Who will be involved?

Participation in this study will be voluntary. All employees will have an  
opportunity to learn about the research and be given information and

consent forms. The study is limited to 12 participants, across all departments. The first three volunteers from each of the following will be involved: management (includes assistant managers), supervisors, task leaders and field staff. ALL participants in this study will be anonymous. There will be no referral to anyone by name and events may be slightly altered to protect anonymity. Participants will be able to read any referral to their actions or thoughts if used in Lynne's report and ask for changes or for it to be taken out if they do not agree with what is written.

#### If I decide to be involved – what then?

Once Lynne receives your signed consent form, she'll acknowledge your involvement using the contact details you have provided. Next you will be given a questionnaire. This will be filled out in your own time. It should take no more than 30-40 minutes. You can either return it in a provided pre-paid envelope or via a post box, which will be located in the PSI room and checked daily. The questionnaires will NOT be opened, read or stored at the workplace. After Lynne has had time to read the questionnaires she will contact you to make a time for an interview. This will be at a time and place suitable to both. It is expected the interview could take up to 1 hour. Lynne will take notes during the interview, which will build on information given in your questionnaire. At the end of the interview you will be able to read Lynne's notes and then sign them, agreeing to their authenticity. If Lynne's got something wrong, you can bring it up and it can be changed. After the interview Lynne will begin to write up her findings. If there is any referral to you, your actions or thoughts, you will be given an opportunity to read what is written. If you disagree with what's in the report you can ask Lynne to change what's written or take it out.

#### What if I start then want to pull out?

You are quite within your rights to withdraw from the research if you choose to. In that case any referral to you will be taken out of the research.

#### What if I think Lynne isn't following the guidelines that have been set?

All the procedures being followed have been approved by the ethics committee at the University of Canterbury. Lynne is also working under the guidance of two Supervisors:

Dr Veronica O'Toole – [veronica.otoole@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:veronica.otoole@canterbury.ac.nz)

Gaye Tyler-Merrick – [gaye.tyler-merrick@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:gaye.tyler-merrick@canterbury.ac.nz)

You are welcome to contact them with any concerns you may have.

What happens to the information that I give to Lynne?

It will be kept securely at Lynne's place for a period of two years. After that time, it will all be destroyed.

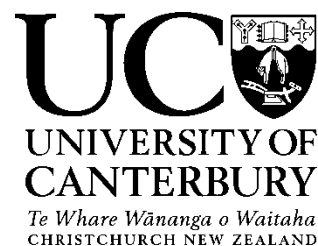
What if I want to know more?

Please contact Lynne, she will be more than happy to arrange a time to have a chat with you.

Thanks ☺

Lynne

## Appendix D – Participants’ Consent Form



### Participants’ Consent Form

***From Mountain Top to Coastal Wetlands: A Case Study of Employees’ Attitudes and Values about Workplace Training and the Influence of These on Career Development.***

*I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis, I agree to participate in the project, with the understanding that confidentiality will be preserved under the following conditions. (Please tick all options you are comfortable with).*

#### **RESEARCH USE:**

- ☐ I consent to publication of the results of the project through Lynne Maguire’s Masters thesis
  
- ☐ I consent to publication of the results in other related reports and research publications.
  
- ☐ I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information that I have provided.

☐ I note that the project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee

Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to me in person or post in the prepaid envelope to:

Lynne Maguire  
128 Karamea Highway  
RD1  
WESTPORT  
P: 03 2808688  
M: 027 4757545  
E: [lma93@uclive.ac.nz](mailto:lma93@uclive.ac.nz)

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